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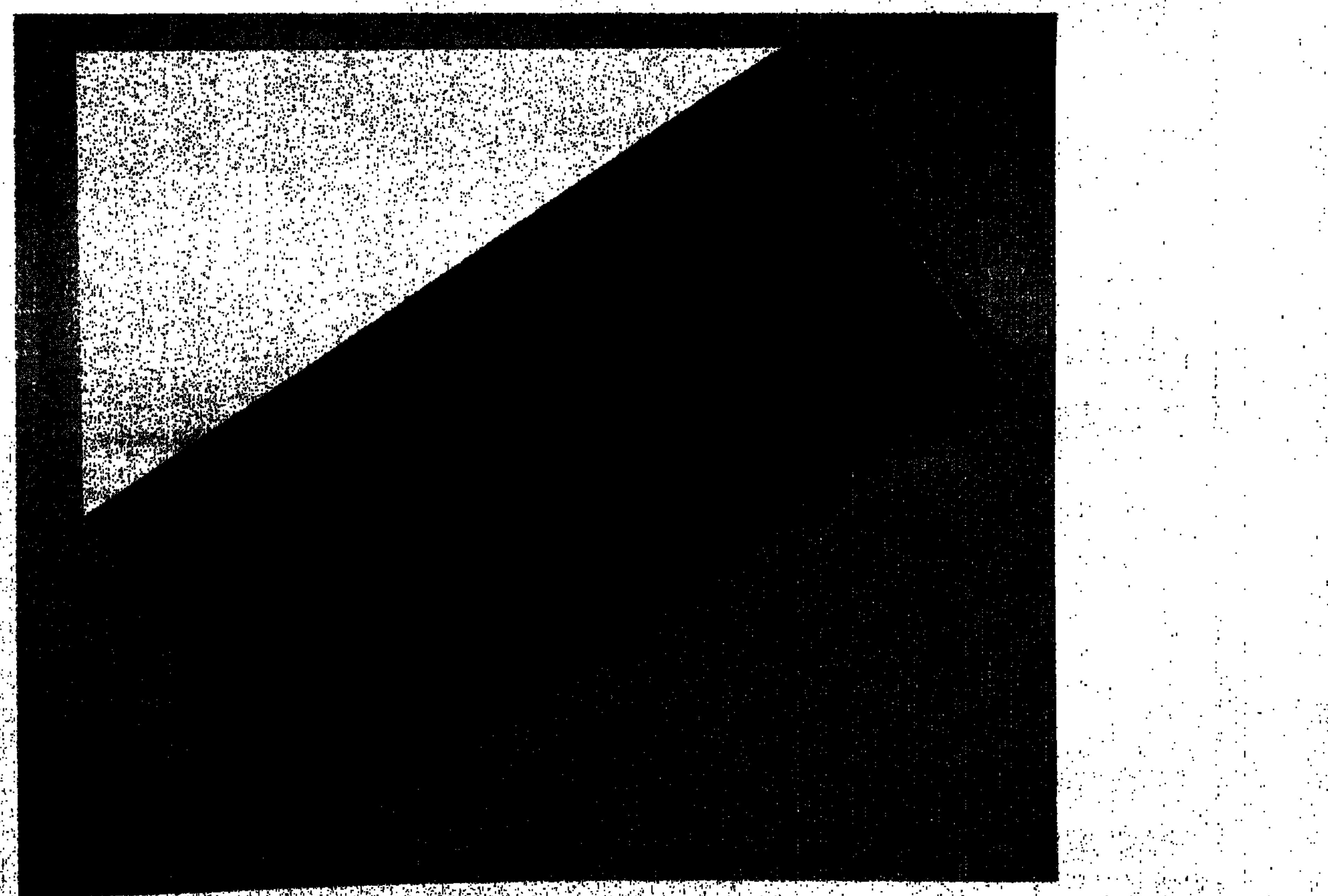

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Cover picture — Ellsworth Kelly's "White Triangle with Black", 1976, is on show at the Mayor Gallery, 22a Cork Street, London W1, until May 17 in the exhibition *A Tribute to Leo Castelli*. Castelli, whose gallery on East 77th Street, New York, was the venue for the first one-man shows of painters such as Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns and Frank Stella, continues to be one of the most influential and respected dealers in contemporary art. Among the paintings on show at the Mayor Gallery is the Stella "Play Skool Screen", 1983, a 1984 (untitled) Johns, and Claes Oldenburg's "Soft Tires for Airflow – Scale 5 (model)", 1965.

From Salop to the Galapagos

Stefan Collini

FREDERICK BURKHARDT and SYDNEY SMITH (Editors)
The Correspondence of Charles Darwin
Volume 1, 1821–1836
702pp. Cambridge University Press. £30.
0521 25587 2

"You care for nothing but shooting, dogs, and rat-catching, and you will be a disgrace to yourself and all your family." Such parental admonitions are not, of course, intended as purely predictive statements, and the words of a prosperous Shrewsbury doctor to his younger son in 1825 no doubt served various less scientific functions. Still, considered merely as a piece of crystal-gazing this almost ranks with those unfortunate affirmations of the stability of the French monarchy made in 1788 or prophecies of perpetual peace made in 1913. Few fathers – Vicenzio Galilei, Isaac Newton, Hermann Einstein may be candidates – have produced offspring who have so fundamentally changed mankind's view of the natural world as Dr Robert Waring Darwin's son was to do. Darwin *fils* was still to get in a few scrapes, to be sure, but his achievements have given the paternal name a greater currency in the Western world than could be boasted of by any fathers, Heinrich Marx and God excepted.

The relationship to nature implied in this early rebuke – intimate, predatory, traditional – provides something of a keynote for this first volume of Darwin's correspondence. Inevitably, the first volume of such large-scale editions is likely, the freakishly precocious apart, to concern the subject's life before he had completed any of those achievements which are held to merit such lavish posthumous attention. The shelves of university libraries are filling up with volumes of letters by prospective writers who had yet to do more than confess large ambitions, rising politicians who had yet to find a seat, and a host of square pegs chafing at the frustrations of round holes. The interest of early letters in such cases often lies less in intimations of the subject's future greatness than in the unusually rich picture they provide of the lives of certain historical categories of people. And so it is with the 338 letters to and from Darwin in this volume, which span the period from his Shrewsbury schooldays to his return from the Beagle voyage at the age of twenty-seven. These letters are grist for the historian of the mores of the Shropshire gentry in the early nineteenth century at least as much as they are for the historian of science narrowly conceived, and they have a less austerely professional appeal for many other readers besides.

Partly, perhaps, because many of the letters are to or from Darwin's marriageable sisters, much of their substance concerns speculation about the romantic intentions and tactics of the respectable young gentlemen of the neighbourhood. One almost expects Mr Darcy or Mr Knightley to put in an appearance. Indeed, there are interesting signs of the sensibilities of several of the principals having been partly formed by immersion in that fictional world. Darwin's future wife, Emma Wedgwood, is described by her sister as refraining from attending upon a group of young officers for fear of appearing "too Lydiaish", and his sisters imagine the captain of the Beagle to be, so perfect does he seem from their brother's description, "quite a Captain Wentworth". Darwin knew how gratified his sisters would be by his report that Jane Austen's novels were on all the best tables in Rio de Janeiro.

It is a world dominated by the traditional pursuits of the English country gentry: "we are going on in much our usual hum-drum style", writes Squire Owen, father of some of Darwin's closest childhood friends, in 1832, "a little hunting, a little shooting, and now and then a little argument about the Reform Bill". The young Darwin grew up in a world where huntin', shootin' and reformin' provided the recipe for a respectable life. He certainly seems to have been almost as eager to bring partridges to earth as to add beetles to his specimen tray. His botanizing, of which his beetle-mania was the most highly developed expression, here appears as a natural outgrowth of his pragmatic familiarity with the ways of the countryside. It was a relation to nature that could have religious and intellectual as well as social dimensions. Like so many younger sons of his station, Darwin went to Cambridge in order to become a parson; a taste for natural history would be considered a positive adornment in a country vicar. Since the gentry and the clergy were often separated only by a few months or years in the order of their birth, the rural pursuits common to the class were as much a foundation for the intellectual edifice of natural theology as they were for the more practical deliberations of the magistrates' bench. The evidence of the Creator's benign intentions and endlessly ingenious devisings was, after all, more obvious in Shropshire than in, say, Shoreditch. Reading Paley was the part of the undemanding Cambridge syllabus Darwin most enjoyed: they shared a sense of delighted wonder at the intricate arrangement of the order of nature. *The Origin of Species* is not unlike a version of Paley without God, and in the case of Paley's enlightened eighteenth-century rational Christianity the omission would not have made as much difference as might at first be supposed.

By the time Darwin went up to Cambridge in January 1828, he was already on his way to becoming an unusually ardent and methodical entomologist, and his studies there and for two years previously at Edinburgh, unsystematic as they were, gave him an acquaintance with a range of cognate sciences not possessed by most of Gilbert White's imitators. Still, when he graduated in 1831 (he never showed any aptitude for Mathematics and did not take Honours, a very common and not at all discreditable course in the early nineteenth century), it was to life in a country vicarage surrounded by children and beetles that he looked forward. And even during the voyage whose results were, from one point of view, to cast doubts on the whole enterprise of natural theology, he continued to anticipate, even to yearn for, such an image of future contentment: "Although I like this knocking about", he reported to one of his sisters from South America in 1832, "I find I steadily have a distant prospect of a very quiet parsonage, and I can see it even through a grove of Palms."

By then, of course, the formative opportunity of Darwin's life had offered itself and been accepted. A close sequence of letters written at the time when the question of the Beagle voyage first arose brings out, with the immediacy of day-to-day reporting, the extent to which the decision hung in the balance. Darwin's father at first objected to the proposal, anxious that a long absence on such a voyage might be prejudicial to his son's prospects as a clergyman. In a sense, his fear was to prove well grounded; indeed, a little more firmness by Darwin senior at this point might eventually have swollen the ranks of the Victorian clergy with more than one recruit. But after a short period of resignation on Darwin's part ("Charles has quite given up the idea of the voyage"), his father, persuaded by his Wedgwood cousin, relented, and what Darwin referred to at the time as his "second life" began.

His correspondence during the five-year Beagle voyage, when he was more written to than writing, occupies pride of place in this volume, and will, presumably, be the part of most interest to historians of science. As he himself confesses, he was not at this age a particularly gifted or prolific letter-writer, though naturally stirred to greater efforts by isolation and homesickness. His chief virtues as a correspondent, from the point of view of disinterested eavesdroppers on his epistolary conversations, are a certain freshness of observation – the impact of the tropics is rendered very vividly – and that direct simplicity of emotion which seemed to characterize him throughout his life. When not writing about the natural history of the regions he visits, his reflections are of a fairly predictable kind: he looks forward to shooting some cannibals, worries that upon his return he will be too old to look for a wife, discusses the charms of their common female acquaintances and relatives with his cousin and Cambridge contemporary, W. D. Fox, and constantly reassures his father and sisters about the state of his health. Though not a particularly revealing letter-writer, he does occasionally allow his swings of mood to make their way on to the page. His enthusiasm for the whole business, engaging in its boyishness at the outset, declines into a slightly willed pollyannaism as life's little drawbacks make themselves felt ("I am sure, as soon as sea-sickness is over I shall soon fall into sea-habits and like them"), so much so, in fact, that one is rather relieved when yet another delay in the homeward voyage prompts him to a rare moment of undisguised rage ("I loathe, I abhor the sea, and all ships which sail on it").

There is a sense, of course, in which this volume is not only all overture and no play, but is also practically *Hamlet* without the prince, or certainly without the murder. These letters do, after all, only provide an incidental commentary: the main intellectual action is meanwhile taking place in the notebooks and records which were to form the basis for Darwin's later publications. Moreover, throughout the period covered by this volume, Darwin was still a believer in the fixity of species. Only when arranging his materials in the course of the homeward journey in the late summer and autumn of 1836 did he begin seriously to ruminate on the possibility of the mutability of species, and it was not until the following spring that his ruminations led him to become a convinced transmutationist. This volume ends with the initial stages of the reception of the promising young geologist and entomologist by the London scientific community: at this point, even the hero had no idea of the drama that was now afoot, and which will be acted out in subsequent volumes of this edition. But he

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was soon to realize the nature of the piece; as he put it when revealing to one or two close friends in 1844 that he had definitely abandoned belief in the fixity of species: "It is like confessing a murder."

With forty-six years of Darwin's life still to come, years when his domestic seclusion, his illnesses, and the nature of his work all made him peculiarly dependent on letters, the edition here launched has clearly been conceived along ample lines. Whether one welcomes such a prospect will depend in part on one's attitude to the whole current academic preoccupation with the monumentally complete, exhaustively annotated, variant-recording collected edition. Certainly, modern editorial principles have established formidably exacting criteria for such enterprises, and the names of Frederick Burkhardt and Sydney Smith as the two chief editors are themselves guarantees that in the application of these principles no less than in the intimacy with Darwin's life and work the standards of this edition will be beyond dispute. There is an odd kind of grandeur about such projects, and in this case the combination of immensity of scale with tireless attention to detail seems a particularly appropriate form of homage to the author of *The Origin of Species*. The conduct of military campaigns or the building of Gothic cathedrals suggest themselves as apposite comparisons or metaphors, such is the orchestration of diversely skilled and largely anonymous labour involved. Merely to praise the judicious editing, the agreeable layout, the helpful biographical and bibliographical appendices and the very usable index seems somehow clumsy or presumptuous, like commending the creators of Notre-Dame for having got the doors in the right place.

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At home with the hominids

R. D. Martin

MARY LEAKEY
Disclosing the Past: An autobiography
224pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £12.95.
0 297 78545 1

The Leakey family merits a special place in any account of the search for fossil evidence of human origins. Louis and Mary together opened up a whole range of fossil sites in East Africa and their son Richard has made trail-blazing discoveries in his own right over the past fifteen years. However, whereas Louis actively enjoyed public lecturing and fund-raising, and has been followed in this by Richard, Mary generally tended to shun the limelight. She only took to public engagements more or less through necessity after Louis's death in 1972, becoming an excellent – if still somewhat unwilling – lecturer. Because of this reluctance to take the centre stage, her major involvement in uncovering key evidence of man's evolutionary past has not received as much attention as it deserves. So much the better, then, that she has now produced an engaging autobiography, *Disclosing the Past*, giving a personal account of her life and work, covering a fifty-year search for evidence of all kinds. She notes that writing her life story at the age of almost seventy without detailed records was not unlike conducting an archaeological excavation; but the results are as fascinating and as informative as any of her genuine archaeological undertakings.

Mary Leakey is an outstanding archaeologist, despite an initial lack of formal training. (By her own admission, she rarely took – and even more rarely passed – examinations of any kind in the course of her productive career.) Following an incidental introduction to Palaeolithic archaeology by her father, the painter Erskine Nicol, during a visit to cave sites in France, she began excavations at Hembury with Dorothy Liddell in 1930. As a sequel to this, she embarked on the preparation of illustrations and came to work on the drawings for Gertrude Caton-Thompson's book on her excavations in Egypt. It was through Gertrude that she first met Louis, then a Research Fellow at St John's College, Cambridge, and agreed to do the drawings for his *Adam's Ancestors*. They first excavated together at Swanscombe in 1934, by which time they were romantically involved. But Louis was already married and his first wife had just given birth to their second child. The ensuing drama, with Mary cast in the role of "scarlet woman", is recounted with a mixture of frankness and dry humour. At the time, divorce was a scandalous matter and the after-effects ranged from the serious, such as the exclusion of Louis from Cambridge, to the petty (he was turfed out of the tennis club at Ware). But, in the way of exiles, they made a new life together, sharing their hunt for traces of human origins in East Africa.

Many years of fruitful collaboration followed, most notably on Rusinga Island in Kenya and at Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania. Ironically, it was Mary, the archaeologist, who discovered major fossil evidence at both these sites, including the partial skull of a *Proconsul* at Rusinga and the first skull of an australopithecine (*Zinjanthropus*), which effectively launched Louis on his successful fund-raising tours of the United States. Mary was principally interested in archaeological matters, particularly stone tool assemblages and rock art: so her continuing gift for finding actual fossils is striking. Even more striking is the fact that she highlights the finds in her book, leaving her equally important (if somewhat less spectacular) archaeological finds rather in the shade. The discovery of the *Proconsul* skull is recounted with real relish and cited as a direct stimulus for the conception of Mary's third son, Philip. By contrast, Mary tends to understate the importance of archaeological materials as a source of evidence regarding past human behaviour. During her lifetime, there has been a dramatic transformation of archaeological technique from the early, undisciplined search for various pieces of interest to the modern approach of meticulously uncovering complete assemblages. Although this transformation is mentioned at various places in the book, its far-reaching consequences (and Mary's intimate involvement in them) are barely explored. Perhaps this is due to Mary Leakey's diffidence about her own contributions. She has, for example, documented an intriguing overlap between the early, rudimentary Oldowan stone tool industry and the later, more sophisticated Acheulian industry in Bed II at Olduvai. Her own belief is that the overlap reflects the replacement of one hominid species by another, but she does no more than mention this possibility and notes at once that other authors see the overlapping sets of tools merely as different "kits" employed by one hominid species for distinct purposes. It becomes clear that Mary has little patience for the controversies, commonly involving *ad hominem* disparagement, surrounding such interpretations.

She also covers, with equal frankness, the painful estrangement from Louis during almost all of the last four years of his life, leading on to her entirely independent work at Olduvai and at Laetoli. The latter site, which she had visited many years previously while making any significant finds, suddenly demanded her attention when a neighbour, George Ndome, found fossils in a batch of sand delivered for construction work. The Laetoli site subsequently yielded early hominid footprints of particular importance and has also produced a fossilized trail of footprints showing that upright walking had already emerged three-and-a-half million years ago. Footprints and animal tracks are a prominent feature of the deposits at Laetoli and Mary Leakey reveals that the first significant discovery was made when three young research workers were engaged in a battle using lumps of elephant dung. Luck has played a part in many of the discoveries made by the Leakey family in East Africa, but this enjoyable autobiography makes it abundantly clear that the greatest element of "Leakey's luck" lay in the initial encounter that led Louis and Mary Leakey to set out together on their lifelong adventure in the realm of human prehistory.

Murder after murder

Hugh Brogan

LUDOVIC KENNEDY
The Airman and the Carpenter: The Lindbergh case and the framing of Richard Hauptmann
438pp. Collins. £12.95.
0 00 217060 4

As with the record of any other *cause célèbre* that of the Lindbergh kidnapping and murder case is crowded and muddled with inessentials and irrelevancies. It is not the least of Ludovic Kennedy's achievements that he has stripped them all away (for instance, it is only deep in an appendix that he refers to the bizarre theory that the corpse in the case was not that of little Charlie Lindbergh). Even in Mr Kennedy's expert hands the story remains long and intricate; it cannot be adequately summarized in a review. Nevertheless certain points may be made which should suffice to show why Kennedy, like many others before him, is convinced that a gross miscarriage of justice took place when Richard Hauptmann was executed on April 3, 1936.

On Tuesday, March 1, 1932, a person or persons unknown stole Charles and Anne Lindbergh's twenty-month-old baby from his nursery in the family house at Hopewell, New Jersey, between the hours of 8 and 10 pm. Documentary and other evidence establishes that Richard Hauptmann, a German immigrant and a carpenter, was that day plying his trade in Manhattan. He continued working until 5 pm. This evidence was successfully suppressed by the police before his trial, for it would have raised the question of how the carpenter could have had time (if guilty of the kidnapping) to get back to his home in the Bronx (sixty miles from Hopewell), collect his car and a ladder and make what Kennedy estimates as a two-hour journey in time to commit the crime. According to Anna Hauptmann and another witness, Hauptmann was really more innocently engaged: he collected his wife in his car at 8 pm from the bakery where she was employed. He always did so on Tuesdays, when she worked late. She said they spent the evening together at home, and only heard about the Lindbergh kidnapping next morning.

In other words, Richard Hauptmann had an almost unassailable alibi, and only perjured testimony – now known to have been procured by the police – was ever brought to overthrow it. Yet he was convicted and executed. The evidence connecting Hauptmann with the Lindbergh case was admittedly impressive at first sight: it consisted of $14,000 of the money paid by Lindbergh to ransom his baby. But if possession of the money was sufficient to prove a man an extortionist, kidnapper and murderer, why was no serious attempt made to find the rest of it – $31,000 or so – once Hauptmann was under arrest? Stray bills continued to surface, suggesting, at the very least, that others besides Hauptmann were guilty, and at large. The only response the police made was to suggest that all such bills should be destroyed as they emerged, so as not to confuse things. Nor was any attempt ever made to check Hauptmann's story of how the loot came into his possession. It was assumed that he was lying, so there seemed no point. But if Hauptmann was telling the truth when he said that the money had been left with him by a shady associate who was off on a voyage to Europe (where he died) then investigation might actually have led to the real kidnap gang. It should have been undertaken as a matter of routine. But the police, having arrested Hauptmann, decided (for reasons that even Kennedy cannot make clear) that he had acted alone, and so entirely neglected the only promising lead that was ever vouchsafed them.

A wave of hysteria had engulfed everyone. Since Hauptmann was guilty he had to be tried, and it would be a denial of justice if he were acquitted for lack of evidence. Acquittal would not establish his innocence, only police and prosecutorial incompetence. So crucial evidence had to be found, or, if necessary, manufactured. Lindbergh, for example, during the ransom negotiations had heard one of the kidnappers shout "Hey Doc!" Two-and-a-half years later he was not only induced to testify (to his incredibly) that he recognized Hauptmann's voice as the kidnapper's, but altered his evidence to make it more plausible, alleging in court that the key words had been "Hey, Doctor!" – thereby thickening a very slender reed by 50 per cent. This testimony, coming from America's cleanest, truest, bluest, best-loved hero was one of the two pieces of evidence that clinched matters for the jury. The other was a blatant lie: that the ladder used in the kidnapping had incorporated a piece of wood cut out of the floor of the attic in Hauptmann's house. This point was never proved; as Hauptmann himself remarked later, it was inherently unlikely – "I got so many boards in my garage, why should I want to go to the attic?" – and the

Hauptmann the day after his death sentence.

ladder itself was one which no skilled carpenter would have made (it was so feeble that it broke under the kidnapper's weight). But the jury could not disbelieve the assertions of the police and the experts, so the verdict was Guilty. There was also the matter of the handwriting experts – but enough is enough. Anyone wanting to know more is referred to Ludovic Kennedy's excellent book.

Kennedy is by no means the first to question the official version of events. One of his best chapters is his last, which describes how, immediately after the trial, Governor Hoffman of New Jersey launched enquiries which established much of the truth about the case, more than enough to warrant a commutation of sentence or even a free pardon. Unfortunately the Governor had no constitutional authority for either action. He was dependent on the Court of Pardons, which was dominated by judges. They stood by the trial judge and by their brethren of the Court of Error and Appeals, and Hauptmann died. Hoffman's findings were neglected for long afterwards, and the lonely battle of Hauptmann's widow for his vindication got nowhere until the 1970s, when Anthony Scaduto published his *Scapegoat* (*TLS*, April 22, 1977), which added considerably to Hoffman's discoveries. Now comes Kennedy, with yet more new evidence. His book is rather longer than Scaduto's, better written and better arranged. Unfortunately it shares one grave defect with *Scapegoat*: it is most inadequately supported by references and cross-references. It is frequently impossible to work out the authority for some of Kennedy's statements.

This is no small matter. Hauptmann's ghost can only be laid by some official, legal determination that he was innocent: such atonement as Massachusetts made to Vanzetti and Sacco. To sway the legal mind a watertight and impeccably presented case will be needed. The failure to allow for this seriously impairs the value of Kennedy's book. Even the bibliography is unsatisfactory (for example, two of the articles it lists are undated). The publishers would have done better to attend to such points (and to complete the footnote on page 154) – even if that would have put the price up by a pound or two – rather than printing a disingenuous explanation of their decision to use American spelling. Either this book is a serious undertaking, or it is not.

Kennedy would presumably reply that he is not trying to convince a court of appeal but the court of public opinion. His record, plainly presented but with no false modesty in a note to his introduction, is formidable. *Ten Rillington Place*, *A Presumption of Innocence*, *Wicked Beyond Belief*: all have persuaded the British authorities, largely because of their impact on the news media, to admit former error and make what restitution they could, in cases every bit as shocking as the Lindbergh affair. If *The Airman and the Carpenter* stirs America as the earlier books stirred Britain there will be plenty of lawyers to wrap up the case in the correct array of citations. For that matter Mrs Hauptmann has been making her case against the state of New Jersey, in due legal form, since 1981. It has not so far succeeded (I wish Kennedy had explained why not). Perhaps our Scotsman's forceful style and narrative skills are what is needed to bring victory at last.

The author avows two other objects in writing. Long experience of miscarriages of justice has left him sceptical of the Anglo-American judicial system, under which it is the business of the police to make the prosecution's case, and adversaries wrangle the matter to a conclusion in court. Instead he recommends the adoption of the French system, which begins with an examining magistrate, an official whose job is not to look for a suspect but to assemble all the relevant facts before the trial begins. Kennedy thinks this safeguards the innocent better than do present arrangements. He has certainly earned the right to have an opinion, but I cannot help fearing that in America such an examining magistrate would be an elected official, as was David Wilentz, the New Jersey Attorney-General who prosecuted Hauptmann and was up to his neck in the dubious procedures which won a conviction. If so, I find it hard to believe that the innocent would be any better off than they are now. An elected magistrate would be just as exposed to the mob's thirst for blood – indeed just as likely to share it – as a policeman is now.

The author's third object is less doubtful. He wants to discredit capital punishment once more; for, as he says, judicial execution is once more being carried out in the United States, and seems to be increasingly popular there. The Hauptmann case confirms one of the oldest arguments against it: that mistakes can and will be made, but, because death is irreversible, cannot be corrected. That is the case of reason. But the description of Hauptmann's death: the agonizing succession of reprieves, all followed by confirmations of sentence; the distress and humiliation inflicted on the victim by the physical preparations for the electric chair; above all, what Mr Kennedy quite rightly calls "the pornographic life-show" of Hauptmann's electrocution before forty-five invited witnesses – this is all informed with passion. The appeal is not to our reason, but to our sense of human solidarity. Capital punishment – deliberate, state-sanctioned murder – is not something we should do to each other.

> A mask was placed over his face, so that the spectators might be spared the horrific contortions that two thousand volts do to a man's features, forcing his eyes almost out of his head. . . . the full charge drove into Hauptmann's body. He went rigid, strained against the straps, dropped back as the whine of the dynamos fell. One rookie spectator, unable to contain himself, cried out, "Christ, it's terrible!" The process was repeated a second and third time. . . . The spectators noticed a wisp of smoke above Hauptmann's head.

If the memory of Richard Hauptmann does anything to prevent the repetition of such obscenities we shall know that, after all, he did not die quite uselessly. It was what he hoped himself. A cheerful, optimistic soul, and a devout Lutheran, it had for long been impossible for him to believe that he really was going to be killed for a crime he had not committed. When at last he had to face the fact, his religious faith wavered. But eventually his sufferings wearied him of life. At the very end, just before his death, he issued a final statement, which was anything but the confession his tormentors still hoped for.

> I am glad that my life in a world which has not understood me has ended. Soon I will be at home with my Lord. And as I love my Lord, so I am dying an innocent man. Should however my death serve for the purpose of abolishing capital punishment . . . I feel that my death has not been in vain.

It is impossible not to hope that his voice may yet be listened to.

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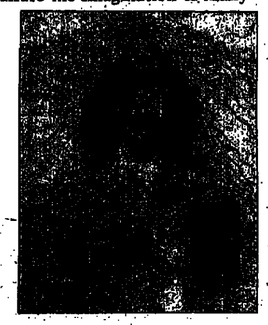

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The Leakey family merits a special place in any account of the search for fossil evidence of human origins. Louis and Mary together opened up a whole range of fossil sites in East Africa and their son Richard has made trail-blazing discoveries in his own right over the past fifteen years. However, whereas Louis actively enjoyed public lecturing and fund-raising, and has been followed in this by Richard, Mary generally tended to shun the limelight. She only took to public engagements more or less through necessity after Louis's death in 1972, becoming an excellent – if still somewhat unwilling – lecturer. Because of this reluctance to take the centre stage, her major involvement in uncovering key evidence of man's evolutionary past has not received as much attention as it deserves. So much the better, then, that she has now produced an engaging autobiography, *Disclosing the Past*, giving a personal account of her life and work, covering a fifty-year search for evidence of all kinds. She notes that writing her life story at the age of almost seventy without detailed records was not unlike conducting an archaeological excavation; but the results are as fascinating and as informative as any of her genuine archaeological undertakings.

Mary Leakey is an outstanding archaeologist, despite an initial lack of formal training. (By her own admission, she rarely took – and even more rarely passed – examinations of any kind in the course of her productive career.) Following an incidental introduction to Palaeolithic archaeology by her father, the painter Erskine Nicol, during a visit to cave sites in France, she began excavations at Hembury with Dorothy Liddell in 1930. As a sequel to this, she embarked on the preparation of illustrations and came to work on the drawings for Gertrude Caton-Thompson's book on her excavations in Egypt. It was through Gertrude that she first met Louis, then a Research Fellow at St John's College, Cambridge, and agreed to do the drawings for his *Adam's Ancestors*. They first excavated together at Swanscombe in 1934, by which time they were romantically involved. But Louis was already married and his first wife had just given birth to their second child. The ensuing drama, with Mary cast in the role of "scarlet woman", is recounted with a mixture of frankness and dry humour. At the time, divorce was a scandalous matter and the after-effects ranged from the serious, such as the exclusion of Louis from Cambridge, to the petty (he was turfed out of the tennis club at Ware). But, in the way of exiles, they made a new life together, sharing their hunt for traces of human origins in East Africa.

Many years of fruitful collaboration followed, most notably on Rusinga Island in Kenya and at Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania. Ironically, it was Mary, the archaeologist, who discovered major fossil evidence at both of these sites, including the partial skull of *Proconsul* at Rusinga and the first skull of a robust australopithecine (*Zinjanthropus*), which effectively launched Louis on his successful fund-raising tours of the United States. Yet Mary was principally interested in archaeological matters, particularly stone tool assemblages and rock art: so her continuing gift for finding actual fossils is striking. Even more striking is the fact that she highlights the fossil finds in her book, leaving her equally important (if somewhat less spectacular) archaeological finds rather in the shade. The discovery of the *Proconsul* skull is recounted with special relish and cited as a direct stimulus for the conception of Mary's third son, Philip. By contrast, Mary tends to understate the importance of archaeological materials as a source of evidence regarding past human behaviour. During her lifetime, there has been a dramatic transformation of archaeological techniques, from the early, undisciplined search for obvious pieces of interest to the modern approach of meticulously uncovering complete assemblages. Although this transformation is mentioned at various places in the book, its far-reaching consequences (and Mary's integral involvement in them) are barely explored. Perhaps this is due to Mary Leakey's diffidence about her own contributions. She has, for example, documented an intriguing overlap between the early, rudimentary Oldowan stone tool industry and the later, more sophisticated Acheulian industry in Bed II at Olduvai. Her own belief is that the overlap reflects the replacement of one hominid species by another, but she does no more than mention this possibility and notes at once that other authors see the overlapping sets of tools merely as different "kits" employed by one hominid species for distinct purposes. It becomes clear that Mary has little patience for the controversies, commonly involving *ad hominem* disparagement, surrounding such interpretations.

She also covers, with equal frankness, her painful estrangement from Louis during almost all of the last four years of his life, leading on to her entirely independent work at Olduvai and at Laetoli. The latter site, which she had visited many years previously without making any significant finds, suddenly drew her attention when a neighbour, George Dove, found fossils in a batch of sand delivered for construction work. The Laetoli site subsequently yielded early hominid fossils of particular importance and has also produced a fossilized trail of footprints showing that upright walking had already emerged three-and-a-half million years ago. Fossilized animal tracks are a prominent feature of the deposits at Laetoli and Mary Leakey reveals that the first significant discovery was made when three young research workers were engaged in a battle using lumps of elephant dung. Luck has played a part in many of the discoveries made by the Leakey family in East Africa, but this enjoyable autobiography makes it abundantly clear that the greatest element of "Leakey's luck" lay in the initial encounter that led Louis and Mary Leakey to set out together on their lifelong adventure in the realm of human prehistory.

Murder after murder

Hugh Brogan

LUDOVIC KENNEDY
The Airman and the Carpenter: The Lindbergh case and the framing of Richard Hauptmann
438pp. Collins. £12.95.
0002170604

As with the record of any other *cause célèbre* that of the Lindbergh kidnapping and murder case is crowded and muddled with inessentials and irrelevancies. It is not the least of Ludovic Kennedy's achievements that he has stripped them all away (for instance, it is only deep in an appendix that he refers to the bizarre theory that the corpse in the case was not that of little Charlie Lindbergh). Even in Mr Kennedy's expert hands the story remains long and intricate; it cannot be adequately summarized in a review. Nevertheless certain points may be made which should suffice to show why Kennedy, like many others before him, is convinced that a gross miscarriage of justice took place when Richard Hauptmann was executed on April 3, 1936.

On Tuesday, March 1, 1932, a person or persons unknown stole Charles and Anne Lindbergh's twenty-month-old baby from his nursery in the family house at Hopewell, New Jersey, between the hours of 8 and 10 pm. Documentary and other evidence establishes that Richard Hauptmann, a German immigrant and a carpenter, was that day plying his trade in Manhattan. He continued working until 5 pm. This evidence was successfully suppressed by the police before his trial, for it would have raised the question of how the carpenter could have had time (if guilty of the kidnapping) to get back to his home in the Bronx (sixty miles from Hopewell), collect his car and a ladder and make what Kennedy estimates as a two-hour journey in time to commit the crime. According to Anna Hauptmann and another witness, Hauptmann was really more innocently engaged: he collected his wife in his car at 8 pm from the bakery where she was employed. He always did so on Tuesdays, when she worked late. She said they spent the evening together at home, and only heard about the Lindbergh kidnapping next morning.

In other words, Richard Hauptmann had an almost unassailable alibi, and only perjured testimony – now known to have been procured by the police – was ever brought to overthrow it. Yet he was convicted and executed. The evidence connecting Hauptmann with the Lindbergh case was admittedly impressive at first sight: it consisted of $14,000 of the money paid by Lindbergh to ransom his baby. But if possession of the money was sufficient to prove a man an extortionist, kidnapper and murderer, why was no serious attempt made to find the rest of it – $31,000 or so – once Hauptmann was under arrest? Stray bills continued to surface, suggesting, at the very least, that others besides Hauptmann were guilty, and at large. The only response the police made was to suggest that all such bills should be destroyed as they emerged, so as not to confuse things. Nor was any attempt ever made to check Hauptmann's story of how the loot came into his possession. It was assumed that he was lying, so there seemed no point. But if Hauptmann was telling the truth when he said that the money had been left with him by a shady associate who was off on a voyage to Europe (where he died) then investigation might actually have led to the real kidnap gang. It should have been undertaken as a matter of routine. But the police, having arrested Hauptmann, decided (for reasons that even Kennedy cannot make clear) that he had acted alone, and so entirely neglected the only promising lead that was ever vouchsafed them.

A wave of hysteria had engulfed everyone. Since Hauptmann was guilty he had to be tried; and it would be a denial of justice if he were acquitted for lack of evidence. Acquittal would not establish his innocence, only police and prosecutorial incompetence. So crucial evidence had to be found, or, if necessary, manufactured. Lindbergh, for example, during the ransom negotiations had heard one of the kidnappers shout "Hey, Doc!" Two-and-a-half years later, he was not only induced to testify (to his incredibly) that he recognized Hauptmann's voice as the kidnapper's, but altered his evidence to make it more plausible: alleging in court that the key words had been "Hey, Doctor!" – thereby thickening a very slender reed by 50 per cent. This testimony, coming from America's cleanest, truest, bluest, best-loved hero was one of the two pieces of evidence that clinched matters for the jury. The other was a blatant lie: that the ladder used in the kidnapping had incorporated a piece of wood cut out of the floor of the attic in Hauptmann's house. This point was never proved; as Hauptmann himself remarked later, it was inherently unlikely – "I got so many boards in my garage, why should I want to go to the attic?" – and the

Hauptmann the day after his death sentence.

ladder itself was one which no skilled carpenter would have made (it was so feeble that it broke under the kidnapper's weight). But the jury could not disbelieve the assertions of the police and the experts, so the verdict was Guilty. There was also the matter of the handwriting experts – but enough is enough. Anyone wanting to know more is referred to Ludovic Kennedy's excellent book.

Kennedy is by no means the first to question the official version of events. One of his best chapters is his last, which describes how, immediately after the trial, Governor Hoffman of New Jersey launched enquiries which established much of the truth about the case, more than enough to warrant a commutation of sentence or even a free pardon. Unfortunately the Governor had no constitutional authority for either action. He was dependent on the Court of Pardons, which was dominated by judges. They stood by the trial judge and by their brethren of the Court of Error and Appeals, and Hauptmann died. Hoffman's findings were neglected for long afterwards, and the lonely battle of Hauptmann's widow for his vindication got nowhere until the 1970s, when Anthony Scaduto published his *Scapegoat*, (*TLS*, April 22, 1977), which added considerably to Hoffman's discoveries. Now comes Kennedy, with yet more new evidence. His book is rather longer than Scaduto's, better written and better arranged. Unfortunately it shares one grave defect with *Scapegoat*: it is most inadequately supported by references and cross-references. It is frequently impossible to work out the authority for some of Kennedy's statements.

This is no small matter. Hauptmann's ghost can only be laid by some official, legal determination that he was innocent: such atonement as Massachusetts made to Vanzetti and Sacco. To sway the legal mind a watertight and impeccably presented case will be needed. The failure to allow for this seriously impairs the value of Kennedy's book. Even the bibliography is unsatisfactory (for example, two of the articles it lists are undated). The publishers would have done better to attend to such points (and to complete the footnote on page 154) – even if that would have put the price up by a pound or two – rather than printing a disingenuous explanation of their decision to use American spelling. Either this book is a serious undertaking, or it is not.

Kennedy would presumably reply that he is not trying to convince a court of appeal but the court of public opinion. His record, plainly presented but with no false modesty in a note to his introduction, is formidable. *Ten Rillington Place*, *A Presumption of Innocence*, *Wicked Beyond Belief*: all have persuaded the British authorities, largely because of their impact on the news media, to admit former error and make what restitution they could, in cases every bit as shocking as the Lindbergh affair. If *The Airman and the Carpenter* stirs America as the earlier books stirred Britain there will be plenty of lawyers to wrap up the case in the correct array of citations. For that matter Mrs Hauptmann has been making her case against the state of New Jersey, in due legal form, since 1981. It has not so far succeeded (I wish Kennedy had explained why not). Perhaps our Scotsman's forceful style and narrative skills are what is needed to bring victory at last.

The author avows two other objects in writing. Long experience of miscarriages of justice has left him sceptical of the Anglo-American judicial system, under which it is the business of the police to make the prosecution's case, and adversaries wrangle the matter to a conclusion in court. Instead he recommends the adoption of the French system, which begins with an examining magistrate, an official whose job is not to look for a suspect but to assemble all the relevant facts before the trial begins. Kennedy thinks this safeguards the innocent better than do present arrangements. He has certainly earned the right to have an opinion, but I cannot help fearing that in America such an examining magistrate would be an elected official, as was David Wilentz, the New Jersey Attorney-General who prosecuted Hauptmann and was up to his neck in the dubious procedures which won a conviction. If so, I find it hard to believe that the innocent would be any better off than they are now. An elected magistrate would be just as exposed to the mob's thirst for blood – indeed just as likely to share it – as a policeman is now.

The author's third object is less doubtful. He wants to discredit capital punishment once more, for, as he says, judicial execution is once more being carried out in the United States, and seems to be increasingly popular there. The Hauptmann case confirms one of the oldest arguments against it: that mistakes can and will be made, but, because death is irreversible, cannot be corrected. That is the case of reason. But the description of Hauptmann's death: the agonizing succession of reprieves, all followed by confirmations of sentence; the distress and humiliation inflicted on the victim by the physical preparations for the electric chair; above all, what Mr Kennedy quite rightly calls "the pornographic life-show" of Hauptmann's electrocution before forty-five invited witnesses – this is all informed with passion. The appeal is not to our reason, but to our sense of human solidarity. Capital punishment – deliberate, state-sanctioned murder – is not something we should do to each other.

> A mask was placed over his face, so that the spectators might be spared the horrific contortions that two thousand volts do to a man's features, forcing his eyes almost out of his head. . . . the full charge drove into Hauptmann's body. He went rigid, strained against the straps, dropped back as the whine of the dynamos fell. One rookie spectator, unable to contain himself, cried out, "Christ, it's terrible!" The process was repeated a second and third time. . . . The spectators noticed a wisp of smoke above Hauptmann's head.

If the memory of Richard Hauptmann does anything to prevent the repetition of such obscenities we shall know that, after all, he did not die quite uselessly. It was what he hoped himself. A cheerful, optimistic soul, and a devout Lutheran, it had for long been impossible for him to believe that he really was going to be killed for a crime he had not committed. When at last he had to face the fact, his religious faith wavered. But eventually his sufferings wearied him of life. At the very end, just before his death, he issued a final statement, which was anything but the confession his tormentors still hoped for.

> I am glad that my life in a world which has not understood me has ended. Soon I will be at home with my Lord. And as I love my Lord, so I am dying an innocent man. Should however my death serve for the purpose of abolishing capital punishment . . . I feel that my death has not been in vain.

It is impossible not to hope that his voice may yet be listened to.

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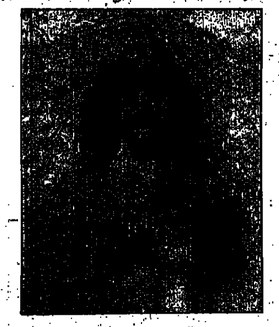

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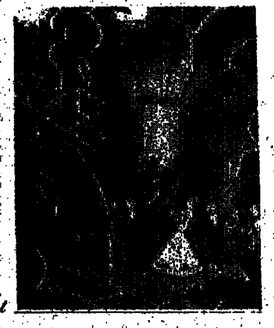


oxford books for children

Confounding friend and foe

Derek Beales

D. MACK SMITH
Cavour and Garibaldi 1860: A study in political conflict
458pp. Cambridge University Press. £27.50 (paperback, £9.95).
0 521 30356 7
DENIS MACK SMITH
Cavour
292pp. Weidenfeld and Nicholson. £12.95.
0 297 78512 5

When he published *Cavour and Garibaldi* in 1954, Denis Mack Smith turned the historiography of Italian unification on its head. The book is now reissued, both in paper and hardback, with a new preface. At the same time, the author has given us his mature assessment of Cavour in a biography that sums up much of his work on the making of Italy.

Cavour and Garibaldi devoted 444 pages to aspects of nine months of Italian history. It highlighted the political conflict between the regular government of Piedmont-Sardinia, headed by Cavour, and the revolutionary movement, represented by the expedition to Sicily and Naples led by Garibaldi. No writer had previously studied the period in anything like such detail or used nearly as many original sources; Mack Smith himself had discovered several of them. The impact of *Cavour and Garibaldi* in Italy was huge, contributing largely to a reassessment of the Risorgimento and unification in all their aspects, not just the political.

The national myth insisted that Cavour and Garibaldi, despite certain known disagreements, must really have been working together in the common cause of making Italy. Mack Smith showed on the contrary that the minister often schemed to deny Garibaldi success, that he seemed perfectly ready to make a deal with the king of Naples, and that he was irreconcilably opposed to the revolutionary nationalism and democracy of Mazzini which supplied much of the inspiration for Garibaldi's achievement. Mack Smith argued further that the supposedly unrealistic Garibaldi often acted more reasonably, moderately and practically than the self-conscious and renowned pragmatist, Cavour. The latter emerged not as a normally honest and direct politician forced by circumstances into occasional deceit and double-dealing, but rather as a habitual liar, a man who tried to guard against every eventuality by floating every imaginable policy.

In his preface to the reissue of his first book, Mack Smith records his surprise, and even some incomprehension, at the book's reception in Italy. He was suspected of taking sides in post-war debates about regional autonomy and the relation between North and South. He was accused not only of factual inaccuracy and twisting evidence but, also of "an austere English puritanism' which led to making judgments that were moral rather than historical". In particular, he was charged with being irremediably prejudiced against Cavour.

Even 444 pages did not suffice to incorporate all his new results concerning the events of 1860 alone. Two early articles showed that Cavour had not, as had often been claimed, encouraged Garibaldi's expedition to sail for Sicily, and revealed for the first time the significance of the contemporary peasant rising on the island. Later writings described Cavour's activity as minister and parliamentarian, how he monopolized the major portfolios, concealed policies from his cabinet as well as from parliament and the public, manipulated elections to his advantage, sometimes used the king to defeat opposition but at other times humoured him in order to retain power. Some of his research became possible only as archives were more freely opened, and Mack Smith kept up a sustained critique of the attitudes of the many Italian historians and archivists who, in some cases even after 1945, seemed content with the garbling and suppression of evidence in the interest of upholding the patriotic myth.

His *oeuvre* had smashed the old Liberal image of Cavour, especially as depicted for English readers by Bolton King, Trevelyan and two admiring biographers, W. R. Thayer and A. J. Whyte. But there seemed little hope of the *maestro* himself filling the vacuum he had created. Rosario Romeo, one of his chief Italian critics, whose own massive Life of Cavour has just been completed in four volumes, declared Mack Smith disqualified as the statesman's biographer by his acceptance of the Mazzinian and democratic polemic of a century ago, uneasily associated with English notions of respectability. "For Mack Smith", he proclaimed, "the entire policy of Cavour in 1860 lacks substantial justification and was mistaken in its aims."

Undaunted, Mack Smith has now composed his portrait of Cavour. It is an important book, because it brings together for the first time in a single volume his major revisions of the story of unification, previously divided between articles, introductions to documents and *Cavour and Garibaldi*. Forty years' research seem only to have enhanced the verve, wit and clarity of his presentation. Every aspect of his subject's life is considered with unmistakable authority.

Until now, in writing about Cavour, Mack Smith has seemed to many readers to have played the role of counsel for the prosecution. This he denies:

> I should make clear that my concern is not so much with whether he should at any moment have acted differently, nor whether he judged well or badly, but rather in showing the results that flowed from the way he behaved and perhaps had to behave. If he himself admitted to making mistakes, or if some contemporaries thought that other more profitable lines of conduct were open to him, these are straightforward facts of history, and as such deserve mention without any overtones of blame or reproach.

Although Garibaldi's part in the process of unification ought to be more highly rated that it once was, Cavour was still "the most outstandingly successful European politican of the century".

There is a measure of inconsistency here. In Mack Smith's preface to his *Victor Emanuel, Cavour, and the Risorgimento* (1971) Cavour only "proved himself to be one of the cleverer and more resourceful statesmen of the century, and one of the most successful, a man who for political skill and courage had few equals". It is hard not to feel in Mack Smith's writing a mixture of revulsion and amusement at the patriotic fervour and idealistic approach of Italian historiography about the national movement; positive glee at the discovery of omissions and corruption in the published record, particularly when they tell against the Establishment; and an anachronistic application to Cavour's behaviour of the criteria of English constitutional government as recommended by Bagehot and Gladstone. In the biography these attitudes still show themselves, even though Cavour is now accorded lavish praise. After reading about his behaviour towards parliament, it comes as a surprise to learn that "his great achievement was . . . to develop and to extend constitutional practice". The way in which he is seen to have mismanaged his early life makes it difficult to account for the transcendent position he seems already to have held in political and parliamentary life within a few years of first taking office. Mack Smith makes a case for his conduct in 1860, when "he confounded all" his critics, "friend and foe". But the deceit, the double dealing, the fits of ungovernable temper, the growing authoritarianism, the ferocious hostility to the revolutionaries remain difficult to accept, even from the most Machiavellian standpoint.

One reply that the author might make, as in his article on Cavour and the Thousand, is that "there is no necessary reason why truth should be beautiful or simple". If Victor Emanuel was prepared to put up with a minister who broke a palace clock in one of his furious arguments with the king, then that minister must surely have become irreplaceable. If other politicians acquiesced in his holding all the principal offices and concealing his policies, then the man's ability must have appeared fabulous. Among great men Achilles was unusual in possessing only one weakness. Over almost exactly the same period as Cavour, Disraeli turned himself from an absurd wastrel into an indispensable party leader. Gladstone's ill-temper, deceptions of himself and others and prostitute visiting did not outweigh his unique qualifications as minister and parliamentarian. The relations between Cavour and Victor Emanuel were scarcely more fraught than those between Bismarck and William or Richelieu and Louis XIII. But in this biography the subject's Brobdingnagian faults remain hard to reconcile with his Herculean achievements.

Mack Smith gives us a most useful bibliography, but denies us footnotes. He excuses this deprivation by saying that he has cited his sources and justified his judgments in other writings. This is largely true. But there are difficulties. To give one example, he tells us that when the northern army met Garibaldi's in October 1860,

> Cavour again ordered General Fanti to prepare to use force if necessary against the forty or fifty thousand men in Garibaldi's army. If really necessary – to quote his own words which were subsequently deleted from the published text – they might have to be "exterminated to the last man".

This is an astounding piece of evidence, illustrating the strength of Cavour's animus against the revolutionaries and the extremes to which his wild schemes could run. It fully justifies both Mack Smith's stance in *Cavour and Garibaldi* and his denunciation of the historians who fudged the record. Now, I have not been able to find this quotation anywhere else in his *oeuvre*. That may well be my failure; but if so, it still makes a case for footnoting this biography. If, however, Mack Smith has never given chapter and verse for this remark, then the argument for including references becomes overwhelming.

As these criticisms imply, this book is provocative as well as brilliant. It is the best available biography of Cavour. And it offers the best introduction to Denis Mack Smith's work on Italian unification, which ranks as a major achievement of modern historical writing.

The State as a sponge

P. A. Ginsborg

MARTIN CLARK
Modern Italy 1871–1982
444pp. Longman. £19.50 (paperback, £19.50).
0 582 48361 1

Martin Clark's new book on modern Italy is much to be welcomed. There has been no attempt by an Anglo-Saxon historian at a synthesis of this kind since Denis Mack Smith's *Italy: A modern history*, the first edition of which dates back to 1959. Dr Clark lacks Mack Smith's power of argument and deep understanding of the origins of the nation state, but his book has other merits. In particular, its last hundred pages contain a readable and convincing portrait of Italy since 1943. Not much has been written on the Italian Republic, and Clark's well-organized chapters are the best short account so far available in English.

In general, Clark writes well and wittily. He is intent, in a fairly gentle sort of way, on debunking nearly everyone and everything, and on destroying many a myth (his pages on the Resistance are a good example of this). At the same time he tries hard to be fair to everyone, and fails inevitably. He is rather less than fair to the Italian Communists, about whom he is far too reductive, with the result that the paradoxes of central Italy, among other things, are left unexplained. He is rather more than fair to the Catholic Church, with which he seems in considerable sympathy. His pages on the Church are among the best in the book, but one can hardly write, as Clark does, about the building speculation that laid waste Rome in the 1950s and 60s without mentioning the Vatican's leading role in it, through the Società Generale Immobiliare. He is also rather more than fair to the Fascists, with whom he has little sympathy. His judgment on Fascism's destruction of all political liberty, "[it] was not trivial, and certainly hurt many members of Italy's former élite", is extraordinarily laid back, and one might legitimately ask what the rest of the Italian population thought about the matter. His tone here contrasts stridently, for example, with the flurry of adjectives which greet Italy's post-war education system: "frightful, rigid, unreal, enclosed, boring and profoundly stupid".

Clark makes it clear at the start that his emphasis will be on social history and that he has "little time for narrative political history". Such an approach, given the present state of historiography on modern Italy, has much to commend it. Sadly, *Modern Italy 1871–1982* does not really live up to this promise. There is more social history in it than in many textbooks (with good sections on demography, education, the police and the judiciary), but not nearly enough. For example, he rightly criticizes the Einaudi *Storia d'Italia* for its failure to deal with the family, but in the end finds very little space for it himself. Rather surprisingly, perhaps by way of compensation, we get a great deal of detailed and well-written political narrative. There are excellent accounts in this vein both of the rise of Fascism and its fall.

The book's main weakness is a lack of a developed interpretative framework. For Clark the key to understanding modern Italy lies in the recurring pattern of "absorption", whereby the representatives of dissident groups and sections of society ("the Church, the South, the industrial workers, the peasant landowners, etc") are drawn into the political machinery of the state. This is the dominant theme of the book. Indeed, so much "absorption" takes place in its pages that by the end the nation state comes to resemble nothing so much as a gigantic sponge.

Trasformismo, which is what Clark's "absorption" is, has always been an important analytical tool for understanding modern Italy. But it only takes us so far, and Clark's rather indiscriminate use of it tends to obscure as much as it clarifies. It is vital, for instance, to try and distinguish clearly between which groups in Italian society were effectively integrated and when, and which were not, and above all to try and understand why some have been more integrated than others. Clark does not do this nearly enough, with the result that the reader is left rather baffled by the course of events. On p89 we read that "Above all disaffection was absorbed", but by p104 "Popular disaffection seemed to be stronger than ever". Again, on p177, at the end of the second part of the book, we find that "Even the Church appeared remoulded", even most of the 'subversives' had become respectable parliamentarians". But a few pages later Red Week occurs, armed peasants capture a general near Ravenna, and by p211 "the two major groups of 'outsiders', Socialists and Catholics, were also more troublesome than ever". These heady contrasts between an avowed "absorption" and actual revolt continue until we get to the Hot Autumn of 1969, when a rather tired Clark concludes "In these circumstances the Italian tradition is to riot; and that is what people did". By this time it is clear that dynamics other than *trasformismo* or a propensity to riot are at work in modern Italian history. They are difficult to locate and to understand, but Clark does not give us much idea of where we might start to look.

As far as balance goes, Clark does well, though there are some obvious *lacunae*. He is good on the introduction of regional governments after 1970, but weak, historically, on the regions themselves, and offers no discussion of the thesis of the Three Italies. There is too little on the Mafia, and an insufficient attempt to set Italian history firmly in its international context.

The least attractive chapter of this book is unfortunately the first, where there are signs of a certain contempt for Italian intellectual life. Thus, according to Clark, "too many Italian historians write in operatic terms", where "Right must always triumph over Wrong"; for him it is better that many documents concerning contemporary Italian history are now housed in Washington or Oxford rather than in Italy; and how silly it is of the Italians to have fifteen institutes to study the history of anti-Fascism and not one to study Fascism itself. These remarks, and others like them, are not just unworthy; they are also wrong. There are very few "operatic" Italian historians at work that I am aware of; anyone who has studied in the Washington archives will know that some parts of them are worse than anything in Italy; and the many Istituti storici della Resistanza have enlarged their original brief so as to study Fascism as well as anti-Fascism. These criticisms are not intended to obscure the merits of Clark's book. His political position (somewhere to the right of centre) is unmistakeable, but so too is the honesty and clarity of his undertaking.

Protecting the enterprise

Raymond Carr

DIANA BALMORI, STUART F. VOSS and MILES WORTMAN
Notable Family Networks in Latin America
290pp. University of Chicago Press. £24.75.
0 226 03639 1

Family histories are an absorbing subject and this might have been a fascinating book. Alas, it is not. As the authors confess, "it is the product of our equal co-authorship", and those who spend much of their time on committees know that the practice of group therapy results in a lack of style. Moreover, the authors fail to employ that last resort of the historian who senses that his narrative is flagging – the apt quotation from contemporary sources; when the reader comes on the description of the twenty-one pearls – one as large as a pigeon's egg – of the wife of the Guatemalan Marquis of Aycinena, he shares the emotion of a dusty traveller who comes on water in the desert. There is little in the book on the way of life of these Latin American notables, apart from some interesting observations on architectural styles. Yet anyone who has seen an Argentinian *estancia*, the great house surrounded by trees, looming out of that vast plain, must wonder what went on when the urban oligarchies of Buenos Aires drove out for a month in the country or even a long weekend. The remnants of old libraries show their literary tastes, often French; the bathroom plumbing, always English, shows their conception of comfort. Imagination was what this book needed.

All this is not to deny that it represents a useful, even ambitious enterprise, mercifully free of sociological jargon. It is plain, narrative stuff and none the worse for that. Latin America was and is a complex society. A duke, fifty-eight marquises and forty-five counts set Lima, once an imperial capital, worlds apart from the mercantile society of Buenos Aires. Across these complexities, from the later colonial period to the twentieth century, the authors lay down a simple thesis: family networks, established and cemented by marriage, function for three generations. They create, maintain and enhance the family's economic base; they then expand its range from municipal pre-eminence to state and national politics. Those families which fail to pick up a desirable match contract and vanish. The Lawries of Buenos Aires insisted on marrying English-speaking immigrants. Though the second Lawrie was a founder of the Jockey Club he lacked the family connections to raise credit. The third generation of Lawries simply disappear from view. By the 1830s the network of notable families had become, the authors argue, the "ultimate arbiter". But with the fourth generation it ceased to protect; politically it has been challenged from without by organized interest groups manipulating a modern bureaucratic state, and economically it has been challenged by modern corporations. Only social pre-eminence lingers on, symbolized by the town mansions of Buenos Aires.

The three-generation thesis is illustrated by case studies of three very different societies: "traditional" Guatemala; north-western Mexico, a frontier region far from the centres of power; and Buenos Aires, the mercantile capital of a vast agricultural hinterland.

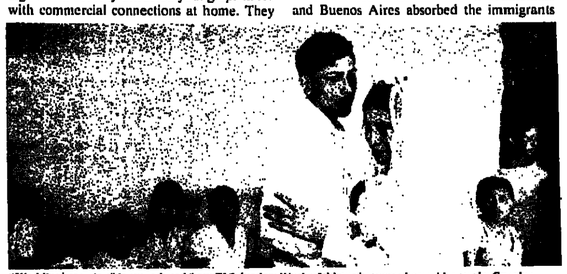
It is the importance of commercial activities and the salience of three waves of immigrants trading with the Europe they had left, that distinguished the Latin American notables from their European counterparts. Take Guatemala, where the indigo boom of the late eighteenth century attracted young Spaniards with commercial connections at home. They were snapped up as husbands by the old landed families. Juan Fermín Aycinena arrived from Navarre in 1748 with 300 pesos. He married, in succession, three wives from the local aristocracy. By 1781 he was a marquis, while his commercial activities made him the richest man in Central America. Juan Fermín maintained his Spanish connections as a "peninsular"; his son was a creole, a native Guatemalan. Time and time again the authors remind us that marriage took off the edge of the distinction between creoles and "peninsulars".

The limited establishments of Guatemala and Buenos Aires absorbed the immigrants more easily than the old families of Mexico City and Lima. In north-west Mexico there was not even a limited establishment to conquer. Newcomers set up their family networks from scratch; the second generation, through marriage, diversified the family enterprises in mining and agriculture; the third generation had to look beyond the local town – they entered state politics and became the in-laws or clients of United States entrepreneurs. But the bargain looked less attractive to the fourth generation, confronted with a strong state and the great US corporations. It was the unsuccessful members of the fourth generation that formed the Sonoran Dynasty of the Mexican Revolution, ready to attack a system that no longer respected local pre-eminence.

In their different ways north-west Mexico and Guatemala are backwaters: Buenos Aires is mainstream. The first generation of notables were often immigrant merchants, some of very humble origins, keeping general stores or *pulperias*. They began to buy land; their sons became *estancieros* on great sheep and cattle estates; the third generation diversified, becoming bankers, lawyers and politicians. Though the economic base of the family fortune moved to the land, its members have remained city dwellers and the family network finds an institutional forum in the great clubs modelled on those of Pall Mall.

The last chapter contains a useful résumé of a burgeoning literature. David Brading's and Van Young's studies of late colonial Mexico show how the peninsular wholesalers rose as falling land values hit the creole landowners. There is Darrell Levi's study of the Prado family of São Paulo, in his words an "élite modernizing family". Yet the modernization they promoted assumed a scale too large to be handled by the family network. It no longer worked. Family networks allowed Buenos Aires notables to survive the disasters of Rosas's dictatorship: they could not protect them so successfully from Perón. His followers sacked the Jockey Club and destroyed its stud-books.

What was singular about these Latin American notable families was not intermarriage: all aristocracies and pseudo-aristocracies intermarry and "networks" provide the maps of social life (to the Duc de Guermantes the mention of a cousin's name was like finding a signpost in a wood). What is singular about the Latin American case was the necessity of networks to survival when society was fluid and political institutions unstable, as they were in post-independence Latin America or, to take a distant example, in the troubled eras of Imperial China. The family network was not some relic of Iberian traditions; it was a protection racket. Without a firm institutional fabric individual members were exposed and individual enterprise was hazardous. In conditions of political stability and with institutional credit the Victorian entrepreneur could afford to be an individualist. His Latin American contemporaries were less fortunate. They needed a loan from an uncle or a brother with leverage in the legislature.



"Wedding reception" is reproduced from El Salvador: Work of thirty photographers *with a text by Carolyn Forché (120pp, Writers and Readers. £16.95. 0 86316 063 8).*

Continental complexities

Harold Blakemore

THOMAS E. SKIDMORE and PETER H. SMITH
Modern Latin America
419pp. Oxford University Press. £19.50 (paperback, £9.95).
0 19 503366 3

When the canvas is as large and diverse as Latin America, the raw material for a general history may appear unmanageable. Although Latin America seems to the outside world a distinctive entity in the international community, the countries that compose it have followed very different paths of social, economic and political evolution since gaining their independence in the early nineteenth century. In short, contrast is more important than comparison. For the specialist on the continent, seeking to describe and explain its nature for the benefit of others, the difficulty lies in striking that balance of interpretation which is neither too general nor too particular.

The traditional approach of largely narrative and descriptive history has had many exponents, perhaps the best among them being Hubert Herring in *A History of Latin America* (3rd edition, 1967). More relevant to the layman, because it contained such a wealth of fascinating fact and was very well written, was Simon Collier's *From Cortés to Castro: An introduction to the history of Latin America, 1492–1973* (1974).

This latest attempt at a general history, by two distinguished North American historians, each of whom has a formidable list of publications to his name, may be strongly recommended. It is comprehensive in its narration and clear in its presentation but it does not lack – as so many similar books do – a theoretical *raison d'être*. As the authors spell out in their prologue, they have been influenced, but not dominated, by "dependency theory", that is, the view that Latin America's historical experience is best explained by seeing it in the context of its economic relations with the developed world, which made it dependent on the latter. But, unlike, for example, Andre Gunder Frank, a leading publicist of that theory, Thomas E. Skidmore and Peter H. Smith do not prefer the clarity of dogma to the complexity of truth. They are careful of their facts. They have used the theory to illuminate the subject, but they are not blinded by it. The result is a balanced history of Latin America which is eclectic in its sources and convincing in its presentation.

Another useful feature is the diagrammatic presentation of material which sets out, very succinctly, a lot of data. For example, Figure 7.1 shows the way the Mexican Presidency has swung since 1934 between left, centre and right: it says more about the political system there than could be put in half a dozen pages of prose. The photographs in the book are less persuasive, and the statistical appendix, already heavily dated, is redundant. There is, however, a useful tabulation of heads of state over time.

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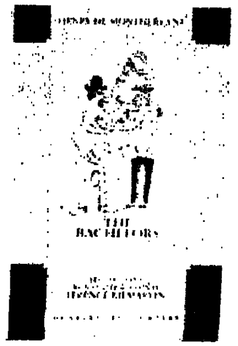

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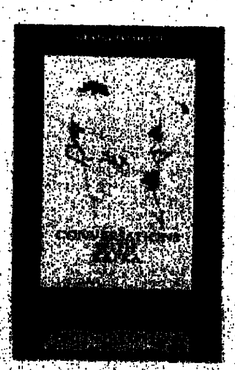

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Leading from behind

J. E. S. Hayward

M. ADERETH
The French Communist Party: A critical history (1920–84) from Comintern to 'the colours of France'
326pp. Manchester University Press. £27.50.
0 7190 1083 7
PHILIP G. CERNY and MARTIN A. SCHAIN (Editors)
Socialism, the State and Public Policy in France
298pp. Frances Pinter. £17.50.
0 86187 384 X
MARTIN A. SCHAIN
French Communism and Local Power: Urban politics and political change
147pp. Frances Pinter. £17.50.
0 903804 48 4

By the time academics get around to studying a subject, it is usually well past its peak. While the French Right has for several years been making all the running, and bids fair to retrieve its traditional hold on political power, the Left continues to enjoy pride of place as far as French and foreign publications about partisan politics in France are concerned. In particular, it is the French Communist Party which has paradoxically attracted by far the most attention, precisely at a time when it has been becoming increasingly evident that it has a splendid future behind it. In retrospect, that decline should have been clear a decade ago and it has been blindingly obvious since 1981.

Whereas the Socialists had reversed their long period of creeping sclerosis by abandoning the men and the positions that had been responsible for its decline for the quarter of a century since the end of the Second World War, the Communists advocated revolution in almost everything, but were incapable of self-reform, except in cosmetic ways and with glacial slowness. They remained Stalinist even after the CPSU had dissociated itself from that incubus, while continuing to regard the Soviet Union and its East European satellites as exemplifying "real socialism". Even when, at its 1979 Twenty-third Party Congress, the PCF subsituted "scientific socialism" for the foreign-sounding and backward-looking doctrine of Marxism-Leninism, it remained committed to an untenable ideological infalibility that had – not merely in its gerontocratic Soviet manifestation – become synonymous with what the *Canard Echaîné* has aptly christened *Marxisme-Senilisme*.

Most important of all, in practice, the democratic centralist mode of organization continues to provide a sophisticated and effective method of stifling factionalism, although the acutely angled zig-zags of recent months have led, notably in the run-up to the 1985 Twenty-fifth Party Congress, to the reduced efficacy of even so time-tested a device. This has occurred despite the high rate of membership turnover which, in the ironic words of Bertolt Brecht commenting on the anti-Communist Berlin riots, mean that when the people have lost the confidence of the leaders, all the leaders have to do is to choose another people, who may prove more docile. The PCF – *the* indivisible party of *the* working class – is a party that has triumphed over its purpose and the message has now reached its erstwhile voters and to a lesser extent its members.

M. Adereth purports to have written a "critical history" of the PCF, but it is one with which that party will be reasonably happy. In his preface he writes that "As a Marxist, I am bound to feel a good deal of sympathy for the PCF", without even considering that many Marxists have also been its most scathing critics, What he euphemistically refers to as a study "seen as far as possible 'from the inside'" amounts in practice to a circumspect general defence of the PCF's behaviour, despite occasional reservations or repudiations of particularly indefensible attitudes or conduct. The PCF is systematically and disingenuously given the benefit of almost every doubt.

While painstaking in recalling many of the facts, Adereth has really offered a slanted description rather than a critical analysis. Even when he points out that at the much vaunted 1976 Twenty-second Party Congress "There was no overt reference to Communists' former errors, above all no analysis of why they had arisen", Adereth offers no analysis either. The critical analyses of non-PCF historians and political scientists are either rejected, dismissed as dubious or toned down into harmlessness. He describes the PCF's entry into the 1981 Socialist-led Government as a "coming of age" but in the light of its departure in 1984 one could ask if entering that government on its knees was not, rather a coming of dotage.

A much more instructive analysis of the PCF's predicament is offered in the chapter contributed by Mark Kesselman to the volume edited by Philip G. Cerny and Martin A. Schain. Kesselman grapples with a question that has history as its focus but cannot be answered historically: "Are the party's diminished fortunes the product of a historical retard, as the PCF asserts, a historic compromise, or a fundamental historical decline?" He points to the functional purpose of Marchais *et al* in emphasizing the PCF's slowness in adapting to change, so shifting the blame for the Party's failures of the 1970s and 1980s from their shoulders on to those of Thorez and Waldeck-Rochet and their associates. (Adereth, significantly, makes almost no assessment of the roles of Thorez, Waldeck-Rochet and Marchais.) Asking "how long a self-proclaimed vanguard party can lag behind history and remain a major political force", Kesselman considers whether in its "strategic impasse" – unable to win power as the dominant partner in a United Left – it was capable of a PCI-style "historic compromise". The PCF's departure from government in 1984 and the sectarian, hard-line preparation for the 1985 Party Congress makes clear that fear of being historically compromised by the Socialists was one of the factors dictating its conduct. Just as the PCF joined the government in 1981 from electoral weakness, it left in 1984 from electoral weakness. Kesselman therefore concludes that the Party's decline means that "the PCF will probably not embody [the radical] alternative" by the end of this century.

There are other excellent essays in this new version of an earlier collection edited by Cerny and Schain called *French Politics and Public Policy*, Kesselman being one of three contributors who have reappeared. While it may be invidious to single out any contribution for praise, the extremely informative study of socialist economic policy from 1981 to 1984 by Peter Hall especially repays attention.

Martin Schain's study of municipal communism reprints the chapter he has contributed to *Socialism, the State and Public Policy in France*. Nevertheless, *French Communism and Local Power* brings together in a succinct form the relatively sparse results of the research of others and Schain's own work. It deals with central and controversial issues, such as whether the party holding power in local government matters or not (taking us beyond the specifics of French municipal communism). There are problems of terminology. Schain refers to some 1,500 PCF-controlled *communes* (of which there are in all some 36,000) as towns or even cities without making clear what this means in terms of population. Also, like Adereth, he casually mentions the electoral frauds perpetrated by PCF "Red-belt" municipalities in 1983 without venturing a view of what the significance of such "irregularities" might be. The use of party *bureaux d'études* to provide alternative expertise to that of central government officials is discussed without adequately considering their importance as a source of party finance, while the role of municipal employees as a source of clandestine full-time party officials is ignored.

Nevertheless, Schain provides some interesting data on policy differences between communist-controlled local authorities and others, though the analysis would have been much strengthened if comparable data for non-PCF municipalities was adduced. He brings out the contradiction in the Party's simultaneous claim that the capitalist state precludes a genuine change in the lot of working people while asserting that communist-controlled municipalities alone can carry out such change and so are worthy of electoral support. Though, like Adereth's volume, Schain's study is over-priced, it is at least a contribution to knowledge rather than retro-marxist special pleading on behalf of gallo-communism. The PCF's assumed "French colours" look like one more desperate attempt to shroud from view, but not to revive, a disoriented, demoralized and declining party.

Electoral affinities

J. B. Paul

HOWARD PENNIMAN (Editor)
Australia at the Polls: The national elections of 1980 and 1983
351pp. Allen and Unwin. $A14.95.
0 868 610860

David Butler, who is a contributor to this volume, recently wrote in the *Spectator*: "Australian elections have their charm. But they come too frequently for most Australians . . ." *Australia at the Polls: The national elections of 1980 and 1983*, the third in a series which began with the 1975 election called after the dismissal of the Whitlam government, is indicative of this frequency. Originally intended as an analysis of the 1980 election alone, it was almost ready to go to press when Malcolm Fraser obtained his dissolution for the election of March 5, 1983. It then became necessary for Patrick Weller and Colin Hughes to prepare two supplementary chapters dealing with that poll, which proved to be Fraser's undoing. On December 1, 1984, Australians went to the polls again, the seventh time in twelve years.

The structure of this book is in many respects similar to that of the previous one on the 1977 election. David Butler once again writes the introduction. David Kemp's chapter in the 1977 volume, entitled "The Australian Electorate", has its counterpart here in Don Aitkin's "The Changing Australian Electorate", which gives data of "quite perceptible movements . . . in political awareness, in education, in social composition". Aitkin notes that by 1980 such changes had had "little impact on the party system" and surmises that one part of the answer to this puzzle must lie in the formal rules governing parliamentary and electoral politics – the bicameral system whose upper house has a power and visibility shared by few counterparts elsewhere, a proportional representation rule that gives challenging parties some possibility of a foothold in Parliament, and the still widely supported institution of compulsory voting which compels the citizen to choose rather than abstain and opt out.

"But", he concludes, "isolating the contribution of these well-established (and sometimes overlooked) aspects of Australian political life requires another essay." True enough, and a volume on the 1984 election would be especially thin without one.

Patrick Weller contributes a chapter on the Labor Party to the current volume, as he did to the previous one. The National Country Party is thought worthy of a separate chapter rather than being lumped together with the Liberal Party, as in 1977. John Warhurst is able to take up where Paul Reynolds left off in 1977 by contributing a worthwhile chapter on minor parties and pressure groups, with quite a bit more to say about the Australian Democrats than was possible when they made their electoral début. The current volume contains much less on the public opinion polls and the "marketing" of the respective parties than in 1977 and nothing on their economic policies. Anne Summers, however, weighs in with a less than sanguine chapter on the balance of power position of women in Australian electoral politics in the 1980 poll. The importance the Hawke government attached to the role of women after the 1983 victory was attested by Dr Summers's advancement to become in effect its bureaucratic supremo in women's affairs.

Will this volume prove to be the last of the series? I hope not, because the 1984 election should provide a rich lode for another one. A long-standing contributor to the series who might not appear is Colin Hughes, unless of course he can reconcile his present position as Australian Electoral Commissioner with his right to comment in this sort of symposium on the effect on the election of the electoral reforms he has superintended.

Striking an imperial image

Andrew Wallace-Hadrill

MIRIAM T. GRIFFIN
Nero: The end of a dynasty
320pp. Batsford. £17.95.
0713444649

"Neither the actions of an Emperor nor the politics of a particular reign can be meaningfully studied until the whole social context of the Imperial power has been examined over a substantial period, and perhaps not even then." Fergus Millar issued these words of warning in 1966; in the mean time his massive study of *The Emperor in the Roman World* has filled the gap he indicated, and it is fair to ask whether imperial biography can now be written by the serious historian. Miriam T. Griffin's *Nero* is in fact the third biography of this emperor to have appeared in English since 1966, following those of Brian Warmington (1969) and Michael Grant (1970). Like it or not, we must admit that there is a market for imperial biography. Nero in particular captures the public imagination (this, after all, is what he wanted to achieve). Dr Griffin's *Nero* is likely to find a wide readership, and deservedly so, since the author has taken care to make her exposition accessible to the layman. But this is a serious work, not a "popular" one. It has grown out of her admirable study of Seneca, with its rare union of prosopography in the tradition of Syme and interest in the relationship between values and action. The reader who wants smooth prose and fine illustrations may still prefer Grant.

Conscious of the objections to biography, Griffin has developed an approach that pays due regard to long-term structures. She describes her study as "a hybrid, biographical in its concentration on the Emperor's personality and problems, historical in its analysis of his fall in terms of the interaction of that personality with the political system". Was Nero's failure the product of his personality, or was he the victim of the Augustan system? By posing it in these terms she sets the problem of Nero's reign in the wider context of the problem of the nature of the imperial system.

The structure of the book reflects its hybrid nature. The first (and longer) part is biographical and broadly narrative, the second historical and analytical. The first part serves to prepare the ground for the more original contribution of the second. The presentation follows the ancient sources fairly closely and correspondingly reflects the heavy emphasis they place on personality: Nero's quarrel with and eventual murder of his mother, Agrippina, is seen in terms of sexual jealousy (she resented his love for Acte and Poppaea) and his shocking and fatal determination to perform in public as a musician and charioteer is related to his youthful enthusiasms. Griffin is able to draw in this part on her study of Seneca; the student will find here a convenient recapitulation of her demonstration that the contribution of the philosopher behind the throne had little to do with his Stoicism. The most valuable feature of this first part, however, is her examination of Nero's artistic inclinations. Here she leaves behind the historical sources and turns (as ancient historians too rarely do) to art history – the architecture of the Golden House and the typology and aesthetics of the imperial coinage. The importance of Nero's literary patronage is also underlined: his reign brought a revival not of literature in general but of the poetic genres of pastoral, satire and epic which had last flourished under Augustus, and this revival has an unmistakable connection with his own passion for poetry. These chapters reinforce the message of the first part of the book, not to underestimate the impact of the individuality of the ruler.

Having championed the historical significance of personality (and hence the validity of the biographical approach), in the second part Griffin redresses the balance: weaknesses of personality are placed in the context of weaknesses of the Augustan system itself (and this means abandoning the conceptual categories of the ancient sources). Four areas of weakness are explored: succession (absence of a clear law of succession left the ruler too exposed to rivals), finance (the need to express dominance through patronal liberality in benefaction led to fiscal crisis), image (the need for applause drove Nero to pursue it where he most readily found it, in the theatre, the circus and in Greece) and militarism (a régime founded on success in civil war demanded from the ruler constant proofs of military prowess).

All this helps greatly to rescue Nero from the worst obstacle to understanding: the appearance of eccentricity. The military image of the early principate is of central importance: among the early emperors the most successful were those who had established a military reputation even before accession, Augustus Vespasian, Trajan; whereas the three who were deposed, Gaius, Nero and Domitian, all lacked *gloria* and were driven to compensate by bogus demonstrations of victory and by the advertisement of glory in other arenas. They were conspicuously insecure. This argument could, I believe, be strengthened in two ways.

First, in the area of the succession. Lack of a male heir – a son or substitute son who could be seen as potential successor – was a fatal source of insecurity to Gaius, Nero and Domitian, childless all three. (Nero's daughter died within months of birth.) Emperors with children had more to fear from within their own families: Claudius was poisoned by his wife, Tiberius was believed to have been asphyxiated by his great-nephew, and even Augustus felt himself threatened by his daughter and granddaughter.

Second, in the area of image. Griffin pours cold water on the thesis that Nero sought to build up his image as a sun-god in his glory. The idea of "solar monarchy" is dismissed as a "singularly ramshackle structure". It is curious how averse scholars in the British tradition are to the idea of the Roi Soleil – curious because it is a part of our own cultural tradition ("Down, down, like glistering Phaeton, Wanting the manage of unruly jades": the image suits Nero as much as Richard II). The association of the sun-god Apollo with the emperor's charioteering and of Apollo the Citharode with his musicianship was one which Nero made explicit. Poets, panegyrists and artists (coin engravers at least) represented him as the new Phoebus. The fallacy of the "solar monarchy" thesis is to present it as an alternative to the "republican" image of the Augustan principate. As an alternative form of constitution it makes no sense; but why should such imagery have constitutional implications? Something is to be gained from the realization that this symbolism is part of the Augustan system itself. Apollo features as both charioteer and citharode on the breastplate of the most famous statue of Augustus, linked with the Parthian gesture of surrender; for Augustus, Apollo was one of several symbols of victory and civil peace. The Augustan principate depended not only on military success, but on the translation of success (real or imagined) into suitable images of the Princeps. Nero's overriding concern was with his image, and the methods he used to create a suitable image were both the product of the system and the direct cause of his fall.

Griffin has demonstrated that imperial biography has a value outside the interpretation of individual reigns: it raises questions about and casts light on the system as a whole. One point that emerges is how far we still are from understanding "the whole social context of the Imperial power". Fergus Millar has vastly illuminated one image of the emperor, as fount of justice and benefactions; that is an image of particular potency in the Antonine period. But there are still other images to explore; and one avenue would be to follow Miriam Griffin's lead in examining visual as well as verbal evidence.

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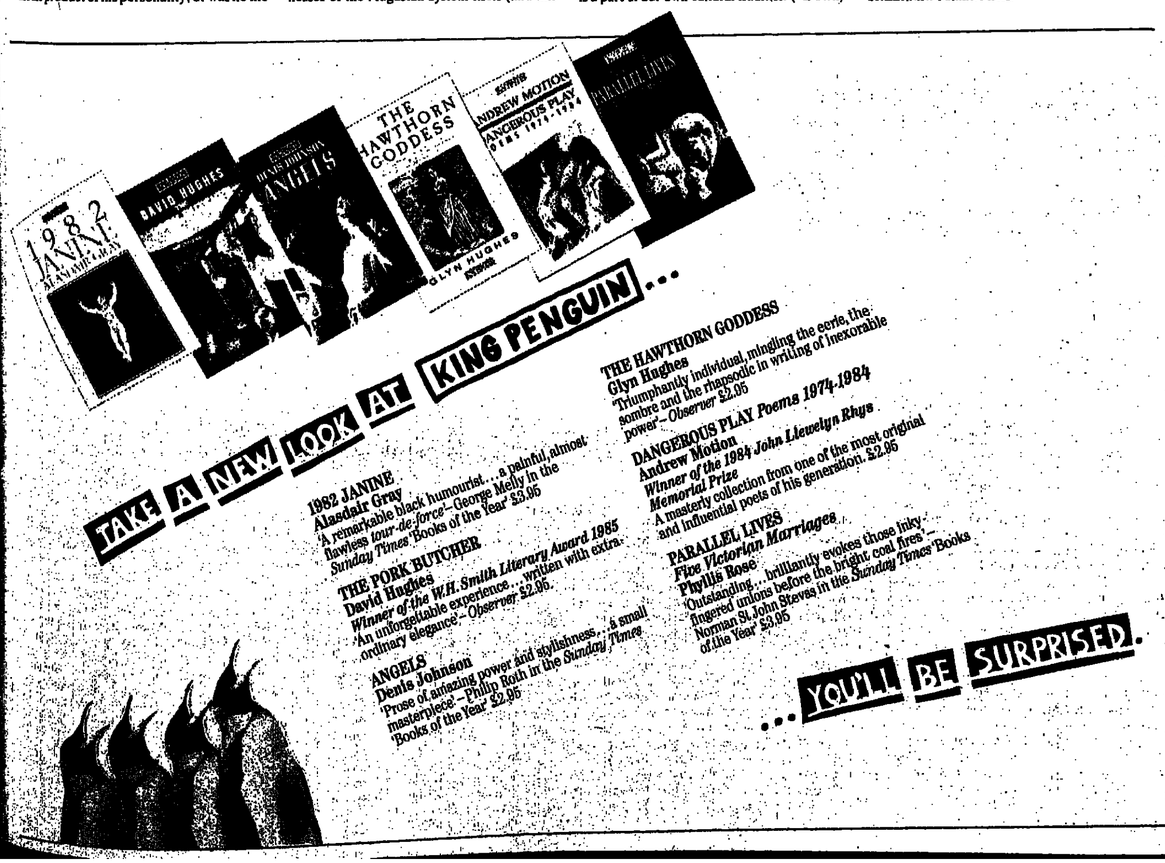


Awkwardly oppositional

J. C. A. Rathmell

DAVID MARGOLIES
Novel and Society in Elizabethan England
196pp. Croom Helm. £14.95.
0 7099 3500 5

In this succinct survey of Elizabethan fiction, David Margolies discusses five major writers – Lyly, Sidney, Nashe, Greene and Deloney – as well as a number of commercially successful but less well-known figures such as Emmanuel Forde and Richard Johnson. The author's primary interest is in popular fiction and its public. What sort of people read these books? Were they merchants' wives, law students, young apprentices, artisans, daughters of the well-to-do? Did the same people read the romantic *Adventures of Ladie Egeria* as read Nashe's witty *Unfortunate Traveller*? There are probably no clear-cut answers to these questions but some of the most suggestive pages in this book concern the insecurity of the Elizabethan fiction-writer in relation to his public and his uncertainty as to the precise nature of the market he was addressing.

What is clear, Margolies maintains, is that a significant proportion of Elizabethan fiction was written from "a social perspective at variance with the dominant ideology". Whereas Sidney shows scant respect for his lower-order characters, popular authors like Forde (who shamelessly borrowed situations and characters from *Arcadia*) were at pains to depict, however clumsily, the injustice that common people suffered at the hands of their betters. Austen Saker's markedly unheroic Narbonus embarks on a military career not to seek glory, as in courtly romance, but because, despite his uncle's best efforts, he cannot evade conscription. Margolies argues that many Elizabethan novels reflect, if only intermittently, a less than reverential attitude to the values of the court. William Painter, for instance, the author of *The Palace of Pleasure*, interrupts his narrative quite gratuitously to attack the "corrupt and rude manners" of contemporary courtiers. Similarly, Deloney's Jack Wilton shows laudable class solidarity in refusing a knighthood and beseeching the queen to let him "live a poor clothier among my people, in whose maintenance I take more felicity than in all the vain titles of gentility". These writers, Margolies suggests, deliberately appealed to the values and prejudices of their middle-class readership. Thus Richard Johnson in *The Nine Worthies of London* characteristically celebrates men of mean estate whose renown springs "not of the nobleness of their birth, but of the notable towardness of their well-qualified minds".

Most of the fictional works Margolies deals with occupy an uneasy middle ground between the learned culture of the court and the "chapbook" culture of the semi-literate. Their authors, torn between aspirations to gentility (coupled with hopes of court patronage) and a commercial desire to appeal to the values of their preponderantly middlebrow public, rarely offer any semblance of a coherent social or moral stance. It is not surprising, therefore, that Margolies finds it difficult at times to sustain his thesis that the growing market for popular fiction corresponds to "the development of an oppositional culture".

Nashe, for one, as he frankly admits, does not fit easily into this pattern. Nashe's sharpest satirical shafts are directed less at the "dominant ideology" of the court than at bourgeois pretensions to gentility, as for example, when he derides the mincing accent of the merchant's wife who was "so finical in her speech, as though she spake nothing but what she had first sewed over before in her Sampler". Here, as elsewhere, the alternative culture which Margolies frequently invokes seems to be identified more closely with criticism of the upwardly mobile merchant class than with hostility towards the aristocracy of the court. (Deloney's ironic comment on the sartorial pretensions of the country clothiers' wives in *Thomas of Reading* provides another case in point.)

Of the five authors with whom this study is primarily concerned not one can be said to be unequivocally critical of the established social structure. Sidney and Lyly are presented here as "bearers of the 'official' ideology", Nashe and Greene are characterized as "ideologically ambiguous" and even Deloney, who speaks more firmly on behalf of the "industrious sort", betrays on occasion a residual belief in the inherent virtue of aristocracy. If any consistent social outlook can be discerned in the latter's works, it is based not so much on sympathy for the plight of the oppressed artisan as on a Smilesian conviction that self-help brings its own reward. It is true enough that many of these popular works of fiction afford a refreshing glimpse of the ordinary workaday world of Elizabethan England, but it can scarcely be maintained that collectively speaking they represent anything that approximates to the beginnings of an "oppositional" culture.

Literature of the low

H. R. Woudhuysen

LAURA CAROLINE STEVENSON
Praise and Paradox: Merchants and craftsmen in Elizabethan popular literature
252pp. Cambridge University Press. £22.50.
0 521 26506 1

Who were the most popular authors of Queen Elizabeth I's reign? Sidney, Spenser and Shakespeare. No: according to Laura Caroline Stevenson they were Arthur Dent, Henry Smith and William Perkins; hardly names to conjure with and although they make frequent but brief appearances in *Praise and Paradox*, they are not the real heroes of this book. These emerge as Thomas Deloney, Thomas Heywood and to a lesser extent John Stow. The task Stevenson has set herself is to define the social, literary and economic contexts in which these and other popular authors wrote, concentrating on their depiction of the merchant classes, and of the relationship between money and status.

This is quite a formidable task, but Stevenson hardly seems daunted by it. The first seventy-four pages of her book briskly identify a canon of 296 popular works written between 1559 and 1603, investigate the background of their authors, and examine the difficult question of the literacy of those of "lower status", and their access to printed and aural culture. On top of all this the economic circumstances of the latter part of Queen Elizabeth's reign are sketched in, and it is argued that while London, the acknowledged centre of trade, grew, the national economy was not so much expanding as changing: old values were being challenged. The social status of merchants and tradesmen is also defined and set against the fundamental alteration in these men's condition by which gentle craft fellowship began to give way to single-minded big business.

The burden of the argument is that the growing literacy of craftsmen, merchants and tradesmen reflected in the changing economy, promoted a thirst for books about just these sorts of people and the world they inhabited. The second part of *Praise and Paradox*, "The Businessman in Armour", goes on to deal with the effect of this on the depiction of merchants in popular literature. The problem Stevenson takes on is to chart and explain how the familiar image of the rapacious and faithless usurer is transformed into the respected citizen and finally into the chivalric and magnanimous hero famous for his political service and promotion of sound civic values. This is where the praise and paradox of the book's title come in. For merchants are praised, Stevenson argues, not by reference to their own class and achievements but in relation to the gentry and social élite. Usury itself ceased to be a difficult moral question, which is why *The Merchant of Venice* stands out as being unusual in its consideration of the ethical problems of money-lending. The familiar clash between the greedy usurer and the young and needy prodigal turned into comedy in plays of the 1590s, while for the Jacobean playwrights the usurer's crime is simply one of social climbing. The relationship between tradesmen and Puritans was equally evasive. For the preachers tended to ignore the morality behind where the money came from and to dwell instead on the virtuous merchant's use of the riches he had already somehow acquired. This paradox of great London merchants who remained innocent in their acquisition of wealth could not really work. There was no language particular to the merchants for glorifying them and their achievements for themselves and Stevenson picks out Deloney's failure to define exactly what his hero *Jack of Newbury* is. The vogue for the prose romance or play died out, she argues, after 1605 to be replaced by citizen comedy and eventually by writing which celebrated simple "middle-class pride".

The last transformation Stevenson surveys is that of the craftsman as clown or rebel, a member of the "fourth sort of people", who turned near the end of the century, during economically bad times, into the gentle craftsman. Once again the praise of him was paradoxical, couched in Arcadian, princely terms, producing what Stevenson calls "urban pastoral romance" set in London where food and drink "express both emotions and the financial ability to be generous".

As one would expect in a volume forming part of the series of Past and Present Publications, *Praise and Paradox* is ambitious, closely argued, broad (perhaps a little too broad) in its historical and literary outlook and based on long and diligent research. It is a pity then that such a demanding book should be marred by numerous errors, misprints and inconsistencies of presentation. A list of secondary sources cited would have been very useful since some footnoted references are never given in full. The huge amount of work which has gone into the appendices listing the canon of popular literature, analysing the lives of its authors, classifying their works and arranging those in which merchants appear in chronological order would have been justified if the results were absolutely accurate, but they are not. The details of the canon of Elizabethan best-sellers are not to be trusted.

Metamorphosis and metaphrase

Alistair Elliot

LEE T. PEARCY
The Mediated Muse: English translations of Ovid 1560–1700
179pp. Hamden, Connecticut: Archon. £20.25.
0 208 02056 X

The Mediated Muse is not, alas, an anthology of Ovid translations. It is a discussion of some of the work and ideas of three Ovid translators (Marlowe, Sandys and Dryden, each treated in two chapters), prefaced by eight pages on "the problem of translation" and followed by eight pages on the paucity of new Ovid translations after the efforts of Dryden and his contemporaries.

The book is very confused in its aim. Lee T. Pearcy says in the preface that it is for "readers and serious students of English literature", and he does explain things they might not know (what the *Heroides* are), but he is also capable of discussing the Latin text of one of the poems Marlowe translated (*Amores* I, 2) in such a mixture of paraphrase and raw Ovid, the lines not even numbered, let alone translated, that this Latinist had to have recourse to a full text to understand him. That four-page run-through of the Latin (farced with strabismically embarrassed jargon like "the so-called penthemimeral caesura in the middle of the third foot") is meant to introduce a look at Marlowe's version; but Pearcy interrupts himself after only a page or so, less than a quarter of the way through, saying it would be boring to go on through the rest of the poem "line by line". All the same, he feels he can now sum up Marlowe's entire Ovidian work as "this labored and uneven version". Such judgments annihilate only the would-be critic. Could he have read "Elegies" I, 5 and III, 6?

In his unselfconscious, drifting way Pearcy now lights on the obviously more congenial George Sandys, who, as well as translating the *Metamorphoses* (*en route* to the New World), added an equally long commentary telling the reader what it meant. Like a medieval bestiarist turning the behaviour of creatures into parables of the Creator, Sandys disentangled from Ovid's myths the truths they embody, truths that were also expressed, but more clearly, in non-pagan scriptures. Pearcy doesn't handle this perhaps promising subject well, wasting ten pages proving that Sandys got some of his ideas about interpreting myths from Bacon, and ham-fistedly repeating several of his quotations and remarks (in what reads like an incomplete rewrite), but at least one feels he is comfortable with the "Neoplatonic, Boethian [?], Hermetic and Christian" scholars that Sandys drew on.

What follows, however, when we come to Dryden, is pure rubbish. Trying belatedly to find a unifying theme for his book, Pearcy comes up with this: "before the Restoration, translation's goal was truth; after the Restoration, translation's goal was style." This demands a demonstration of how exactly Dryden aimed at "style" and not "truth" (and how the others aimed the other way round), but we are not given one, nor a clearer idea of the mysterious thing "style". A way to start might have been to look at an *Amores* poem that had been translated by both Dryden and Marlowe, and a *Metamorphoses* fable that had been translated by both Dryden and Sandys (that lovely Pygmalion story, perhaps). But no: instead, Pearcy quotes from contemporary theoretical writing about what Poesy was, and constructs awful dream passages hand-railed with logical connections ("on the other hand . . . for . . . hence . . . not only . . . but . . . and in particular") but containing nothing; and a ludicrous bit of fake statistics about Dryden's limiting the metrical variety of his couplets in deference to the smoothness of Ovid's versification in the *Heroides*.

Pearcy, then, is a man who should never have been paid to talk about poetry (or metre), which he fancies he understands) and who would be better off (if he could stick to the point) playing with the history of ideas. But I shall remember his book with gratitude for one thing, a description apparently boiled down from T. W. Baldwin's book about Shakespeare's education, which indicates the classroom origin of the word-by-word method of translation (What Dryden called Metaphrase). It seems that Ovid's Latin would be read out, word by word, and be written down in English prose translation by the boys, who then turned the English prose into Latin prose and finally rearranged it as elegiac couplets, preferably identical with Ovid's. What an image of translation! And how one wonders if the boy Shakespeare got good marks at it . . .

Michael Hattaway's *Elizabethan Popular Theatre: Plays in performance*, which was first published in 1982, has now been reissued in paperback (234pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £6.95. 0 7102 0530 9). In his introduction Hattaway remarks on the sceptical, anti-authoritarian nature of Elizabethan popular drama: "These plays celebrate the expansiveness of life and use all the resources of the playhouse in that celebration, both technical and verbal." In the second part of the book he analyses five plays of the 1590s: *The Spanish Tragedy*, *Mucedorus*, *Edward II*, *Doctor Faustus*, and *Titus Andronicus*. Part One, "The Ideal of Elizabethan Theatre", surveys stages, performance conditions and acting styles.

Chinese to cinquecento

J. Mordaunt Crook

PAULINE AGIUS and STEPHEN JONES
Ackermann's Regency Furniture and Interiors
200pp. Marlborough: Crowood Press. £35.
0 946284 50 4

PETER THORNTON
Authentic Decor: The domestic interior 1620–1920.
408pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £50.
0 297 78504 4

DAVID WATKIN
The Royal Interiors of Regency England: From watercolours first published by W. H. Pyne in 1817–1820
128pp. Dent. £15.
0 460 04666 7

In 1947 – from an address in distant Johannesburg – Donald Pilcher bravely published a book entitled *The Regency Style*. His *TLS* reviewer (July 31, 1948) ignored the problem implicit in the title, and concentrated instead on its contemporary relevance: its relevance indeed to the basic problem of all architecture since the eighteenth century – the problem of stylistic choice. "Does Keats's demure little house at Hampstead", the reviewer asked, "seem the *appropriate* background for the 'Ode to a Nightingale'. . .?" And if not, why not? Well, the roots of that conundrum lay in the aesthetics of Romanticism. By legitimizing plurality of style, Romantic aesthetics had supplied Regency architects – for the first time – with a genuine plurality of choice:

> Hitherto ("follies" and other frolics apart) a man had built in the manner of the day, modifying it according to the extent of his genius. But now a style might be deliberately *chosen* for its rightness in a particular context: if not "Grecian" or "Gothic" (the staple alternatives), then Turkish, Indian, Egyptian, Swiss or Rustic. This did not bring the Regency architects any nearer to good architecture – but it brings them very near to us, who also have no single modern style, nor are likely to find one, for all the clamour of the functionalists.

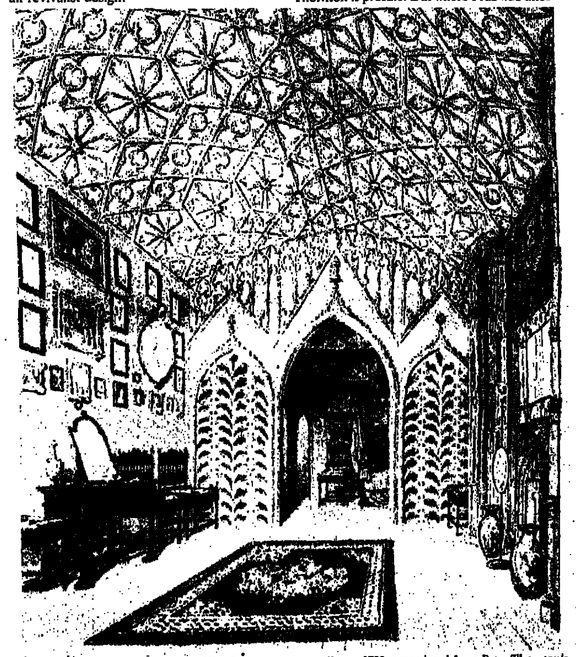
Forty years on, those words have a curiously prophetic ring. Post-Modernism – or rather Post-Functionalism – has revived the dilemma of style. And here are three books – all concerned with the architectural interior – which tell us a good deal (at least by implication) about the origins of that dilemma.

"What style should we build in?", asked Heinrich Hübsch in 1828. "In what style of Architecture should you build your house?" echoed Robert Kerr in 1864. When the Arrowsmiths' *House Decorator's and Painter's Guide* appeared in 1840, models were offered in "Greek, Roman, Arabesque, Pompeian, Gothic, Cinque Cento, François Premier, and the more modern French" – ie, Louis Quatorze and Louis Quinze. "It's all a game," complained one German pundit in 1839, "a matter of passing fancy. If one has had enough of Grecian, one switches to the Renaissance style for the sake of a change, and when opportunity offers it's back to Byzantine, before turning to the Rococo." "The modern Frehchman", noted Jacob von Falke in 1873, "dwells in the 18th century, he sleeps in that century likewise, but he dines in the 16th, then on occasion he smokes his cigar and enjoys his coffee in the Orient, while he takes his bath in Pompeii [or] in Ancient Greece." No wonder the would-be house-builder or decorator was confused. "The bewildered gentleman," said Kerr, "ventures to suggest that he wants only a simple, comfortable house, in no style at all but the comfortable style, if there be one." In fact, he tells his architect: "I don't want any style at all . . . look at myself; I am a man of very plain tastes: I am neither Classical nor Elizabethan – I believe I am not Renaissance, and I am sure I am not Medieval." All to no avail. Despite the rationalism of Neo-Classical theory; despite the proto-functionalism of the Gothic Revivalists, what had been variety of style in the 1840s became multiplied chaos by the 1880s.

It was the Regency period which saw the first flowering of that confusion. And one man, above all – Rudolph Ackermann (1764–1834) – set out to chart, and perhaps control, the gamut of available choice. Here is his description of a cottage in Fulham, in 1810, built for his own use by the Prince Regent's favourite interior decorator, Walsh Porter:

> It seemed to be the study of this gentleman's life to combine together . . . every diversity of style, and imitations of the peculiar taste of every nation on the surface of the globe. . . . An apartment, decorated with all the fineries of China, led you into a cavern, where you trembled lest you should encounter the dagger of some assassin; but having happily passed through without accident, you were ushered into a Turkish pavilion, which perhaps conducted you into a Gothic apartment, and that into a Grecian, etc.; while a rustic public house, whose characteristic accessories seemed to announce the recent departure of a company of boors from the scene of their carousal, served, instead as a porter's lodge, to introduce you to this motley mixture of extravagances.

Ackermann's *Repository of Arts, Literature, Commerce, Manufactures, Fashions and Politics* ran from 1809 to 1828. It specialized in hand-coloured plates of furniture and drapery, and nearly 200 of these have now been brought together and published, with commentary by Pauline Agius and introduction by Stephen Jones, to mark the centenary of H. Blairman and Sons. Greek Revival, French Empire, Egyptian: they are all here. But it is perhaps the Gothic plates – especially those by A. C. Pugin – which steal the show. They certainly reveal most eloquently the problems built into all revivalist design.



The Holbein Room at Strawberry Hill, Twickenham, Middlesex, 1788; reproduced from Peter Thornton's Authentic Decor, *reviewed here.*

Regency Gothic – even in domestic form – was a pastiche based not on secular but on ecclesiastical prototypes. In that respect it embodied no advance on Horace Walpole's technique at Strawberry Hill. A revived, secular Gothic style had yet to be created. When, for example, a circular Gothic Conservatory appears in the *Repository* for 1813, it is justified on the rather abstruse grounds that the church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem, was also circular in form, to say nothing of the churches of the Knights Templars. In the same year, a Gothic four-poster bed is justified on the grounds that it embodies "the principle of the Gothic crosses of Queen Eleanor". In 1825 a Gothic chair is similarly legitimized by tracing its back to King's College Chapel, Cambridge, and its arms to Henry VII's Chapel, Westminster. "This chair", Ackermann adds, "may be introduced with propriety into a church, prelate's mansion, or an extensive library." An accompanying reading stand was modelled on an example "kept in the library on the side of King's College Chapel! – with the addition of a Gothic candlestick and "an inkstand in the form of a Gothic tower". The incongruity of such prototypes was seldom raised – though when it came to a "Gothic Toilette" or dressing-table, illustrated in 1827, Ackermann was at pains to explain that ecclesiastical models had been consciously avoided. Even so, the resources of archaeology were clearly strained. A Gothic bed of 1826 boasted griffins modelled on those of the tomb of Thomas Bourchier in Westminster Abbey. Another, of 1827, incorporated angleposts echoing those adorning the tomb of Crouchback, also at Westminster.

Such games were part of the accepted language of Regency design, a game based on the aesthetics of association. Young A. W. Pugin accepted the rules when – with his father, A. C. Pugin – he designed some gratuitously spiky Gothic furniture for George III at Windsor Castle. But soon after its publication by Ackermann in 1827 young Pugin saw the light. Henceforth his Gothic furniture was to be "the true thing", truthfully constructed and designed strictly according to secular models.

Such stylistic evolution is surveyed – in all styles, and on a much grander scale – in Peter Thornton's most recent book, *Authentic Decor* (horrid title!), which inevitably prompts comparison with Mario Praz's *Interior Decoration* (1965). Praz was evocative and charming; Thornton is prosaic. But where Praz was anecdotal, Thornton is encyclopaedic: the scholar-magpie in full flight. His approach is neither conceptual nor analytic but sternly chronological. He divides his text into six sections, each one illustrated with contemporary views mostly in colour. Views of seventeenth-century English interiors are rare, so the first two sections – 1620–70 and 1670–1720 – concentrate on French and Dutch material. The earlier phase is all swags and tapestries, and black and white tiles; in the later, Baroque gives way to Rococo; mirror glass and curtains begin to oust panelling and shutters. The third section, 1720–70, charts the transition from Rococo to Neo-Classicism: from Boucher and Boffrand to Watteau and Blondel; a sensuous journey with at least one sober diversion – a Palladian excursion in the company of Colen Campbell and James Paine. The fourth section, 1770–1820, introduces a double theme: two movements, Neo-Classicism and the Picturesque; in creative counterpoint. On one side, the order and restraint of Neo-Classicism: Ledoux; Adam and Chambers; Percier and Fontaine; Hope and Tatham. On the other, the Picturesque: irregularity in plan, informality in furnishing, eclecticism in style. The fifth section, 1820–70, is a story of progressive accumulation; it ranges from Schinkel to Eastlake, from Empire to Biedermeier, from the spare elegance of the Regency to the overdressed clutter of popular mid-Victorian taste. Finally, 1870–1920 shows the rise and fall of Free Renaissance, first challenged by and then fusing with the Aesthetic Interior, Queen Anne, Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau. "Clutter" peaked around 1890: the "great clean-up" was well under way by 1900.

The illustrations which accompany each section are not hackneyed views, but contemporary images, fresh and clear and full of detail. And their range is remarkable: from Copenhagen to Cracow, from Hampshire to Heidelberg, from Boston to Balmoral. There is no bibliography. But no doubt a separate "bibliography of authentic interiors" is already being prepared. The text is less exciting than the illustrations. But there is no shortage of information. The invention of "Lincrusta": 1877. The arrival in England of French (Ie, Italian) windows: the end of the eighteenth century. The invention of the Argand lamp: 1783 (the Swiss inventor Argand's patent was plagiarized by a Frenchman named Quinquet). The opening of country house libraries to ladies: late eighteenth century. The use of round tables for dinner: early Victorian (Trollope's Archdeacon Grantly thought them "democratic and parvenu", suitable only for "dissenters and calico printers"). The origin of the word "loo": *lieux à l'Anglaise*, or "English places" (early eighteenth-century French versions of late seventeenth-century English water closets). The first occasion when lavatories were separately labelled for ladies and gentlemen: at a ball given by M Turgot in Paris in 1739. Thornton's volume will surely prove to be a bran-tub for future social historians.

David Watkin's *Royal Interiors of Regency England* is more a book to look at than to read. Like the British Empire, England's royal palaces seem almost to have been acquired in a fit of absence of mind. There is certainly something heroically absent-minded about their progressive alteration and reconstruction. Acquisition, extension, refurbishment and even demolition proceeded spasmodically throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. But the pace was fastest under the Prince Regent. Prinney's manic alteration, decoration and redecoration of Windsor Castle, Carlton House and Buckingham Palace sums up the whirligig of Regency fashion. Those deep-dyed aquatints in W. H. Pyne's *Royal Residences* (3 volumes, 1817–20), commissioned as a triumphal survey, turned out to be a catalogue of ephemeral splendours. The original watercolours from which the aquatints were made – mostly by Wild, Cattermole, Westall and the Stephanoffs – are preserved today in the Royal Library at Windsor. And it is those delicious views – or rather a selection of the most important – which form the basis of this book.

Of course the plates are already well known to scholars. And the complex story behind them has already been told definitively in *The History of the King's Works*. But these familiar images do have a perennial fascination, particularly those of interiors which no longer exist. James Wyatt's sublime Gothic staircase (1800–1804) at Windsor, for instance, destroyed by Wyatville and Salvin in the 1830s and 1860s. Or Hugh May's Baroque masterpiece, the Royal Chapel (1675–84) in the same palace, destroyed by Wyatville in the 1820s to make room for a Gothic St George's Hall. Or William Kent's Palladian Queen's Library (1736–37) at St James's, demolished in 1825 to make way for York (now Lancaster) House; and Sir William Chambers's Octagon Library (1766–67) at Buckingham Palace, engulfed by Victorian additions. Then there is Carlton House itself, the Prince Regent's greatest extravagance: Henry Holland's floating Baroque Staircase; James Wyatt's Gothic vaulted octagon; John Nash's Golden Drawing Room and Lower Vestibule; Thomas Hopper's Gothic Conservatory, all incandescent glass and iron; Walsh Porter's velvet draperies; Edward Wyatt's gilded carving. All gone, and all recorded here in shimmering colour.

W. H. Pyne, alas, ended up in a debtor's prison. The publishers of these three sumptuous volumes are unlikely to suffer the same fate – though two of them deserve prosecution for failing to supply an index. All three books should sell well. Post-Modernism has made decorators of us all.

American notes

Christopher Hitchens

This is, according to all the *savants* of trend and style, the time of the yuppie. On every hand, there is celebration of the selfish, the narcissistic and the acquisitive. It is partly a cult of youth; a cult which is itself determined by marketing considerations and the fancied "disposable income" available to the rising generation. It is also a heavy sigh of relief from somewhere in the collective unconscious. Films, books, magazines, television serials and advertisements are given over to the gossipy, the meretricious and the docile. There is an almost superstitious reluctance to touch upon any theme that is not, in some way, related to instant success and overnight gain.

It might seem an unpromising moment, then, for a young writer to stake his all on the social realist novel. Or do I mean that it is a promising moment? *Red Baker*, by Robert Ward, is not set in the "hard times" of the past, or written in the period style of the *New Masses*. It is unmistakeably contemporary and recognizable, drawing upon very immediate characters, materials, locations and dilemmas. Its reception, which is intense but limited as I write, may still indicate a tremor, if not yet quite a turn, in the tide of fashion and celebration.

Some of its admirers are calling *Red Baker* (which is not about socialism in the bread oven business but concerns the misfortunes of an eponymous hero) a "Proletarian Novel" in the tradition of Upton Sinclair, Jack London and others. This would be a misnomer, both in Marxist and in non-Marxist, not to speak of stylistic, terms. The central character is really a plebeian. He does not blame the owners or the system for his plight; indeed, his sole desire is to be kept on as a hand at the Baltimore steel plant where he and his friends do their stuff. The action of the novel really begins when Red Baker has *ceased* to be a proletarian, and has begun to suffer as an anomic, unwanted person whose skills are "nontransferable" in the America of glitz, services, fast food and high-tech.

It's the yuppies he hates. For $4 an hour he can find menial work parking their flashy cars, or spearing their fashionable garbage down on the re-modelled waterfront. Baltimore, once a raw harbour town, has become a marina littered with Perrier bottles and wrappers from frivolous delicatessens:

"God knows they had to do something with it, it looked like Dresden" said Ward to an interviewer. "But they've turned it into a theme park. It wasn't great before; all bag-booze rummies sitting under a tin pier. But there was something great about those guys – they were like cowboys. It wasn't this yuppie paradise.

While "proletarian" novelists, from Walter Greenwood to John Steinbeck and John Dos Passos, used to stress the role of the demon drink in the corruption of working class manhood, Robert Ward describes drug pushers and go-go dancers as the deep-cut steps on the downward path.

Many years ago, Nina Simone wrote and sang a number called *Baltimore*, in which she lamented the decline of a city. Now, this classic centre of urban industry, neighbourhood and ethnicity is becoming a hulk. Rotting along with it is the idea – elusive but very strong – of a sense of community. Ward is unsparing in detailing the ways that family life, fraternity and loyalty decompose in these circumstances. "I knew it wasn't just the mill that was shut down" says Red Baker. "It was everything I had known and loved about Highlandtown since I was a kid, even the streets and houses themselves. Our whole way of life was going to go." As this brief passage indicates, Ward does not write with any intention of avoiding the obvious. He says, rather superfluously, that he wanted to avoid all the taint of "*Vanity Fair* smart". He half likes and half dislikes the coarse levelling and the local chauvinism which gave the old days and ways their texture. In previous writing roles, he had done the showbiz profile beat and the Manhattan glitter patrol, and it's this among other things that makes him interesting. Is it possible to discern, in the response to *Red Baker*, a weariness with the present regime of the fanatically cute?

* * *

Red Baker was published by Dial Press, which has just gone the same way as the Baltimore steel industry. After sixty-one years, Doubleday closed the entire imprint at two hours notice, serving peremptory dismissals on several distinguished editors and experienced staff. "We can no longer afford the luxury of quality publishing" – with these words Henry Reeth, President of Doubleday's publishing division, administered the quietus. Anchor, Doubleday's other emblem of distinction, has been the victim of reductions in status and budget that seem to mark it, too, for decline or extinction. This reaction to short-term marketing indicators threatens to leave Doubleday as yet another publisher of big, shallow, commercial volumes – ideal for the yuppy coffee table if yuppies hadn't decided that coffee menaced their fragile dietary systems.

* * *

Over at the *New Yorker*, the pace of life is also having to quicken in time with the exciting new style. A few weeks ago, I managed a small first by writing about the fortunes of the magazine without employing, except once in inverted commas, the word "venerable". In an issue late last month, the "Notes and Comments" section was devoted to a four-column editorial setting out the staff position on the takeover by Advance Publications. Internal and external soundings show the editorial to have been penned by William Shawn himself; the first time he has been known to write for the magazine in many decades and the first occasion on which he has not adorned his copy with the gnomic initials "W.S.".

We are assured that the Newhouse brothers, who control an enormous magazine, cable and publishing conglomerate, will preserve the autonomy of the *New Yorker*. The magazine "will be operated on a stand-alone basis as a separate company". The tradition whereby "every editorial suggestion is presented in the form of a question and is settled by agreement" will remain inviolate. The editorial and advertising departments will remain "cordially apart". Employing the democratic plural as he does throughout, Shawn reiterates that "we" regard the *New Yorker* as "a magazine for readers, not as an advertising medium. We regard our readers as readers, not as consumers or as a 'market'". Brave words in these yuppy times, as are the concluding phrases which speak of the paper's spirit as something that cannot be bought or sold. Shawn's distaste for commerce is more deeply felt than it is by some of his staff, who are furious that he vetoed a proposal that they be allowed to buy company stock on favourable terms. I wonder why, if the Newhouse guarantees are so good, they need to be restated in this way. And I recall the famous Wall Street takeover artist, who wishing to break a major clause in an agreement and told that it was inviolate, replied that he didn't give a good god-damn what colour it was in.

* * *

Still, the *New Yorker* generally does keep its promises about considerate editing. One of the reasons for the excited reception accorded to *Granta* over here (Viking Penguin begins American distribution next month and advance publicity has been generous) is the widely felt need for a refuge from the crass homogenization that passes for editing at so many American magazines. Every author has his or her favourite horror story, usually involving the insertion of mistakes and infelicities that were not in the original. In fact, editing here has become re-writing; and re-writing of a very low standard. The finest recent anecdote comes from John Hess, for many years a foreign correspondent of the *New York Times*, and latterly one of its cultural commentators in Manhattan itself. He has written an account of what he terms "The Culture Gulch at The Times", which appeared in the winter issue of *Grand Street*. Reporting from Paris on one occasion, Hess described how a certain event had stirred discussion and controversy "on the Boul' Mich". The *Times*'s loathing of the colloquial, the knowing or the different was manifested in the literal-minded way that it rendered this in all editions as the Boulevard Michigan.

* * *

There is increasing comment about the disparity in the reception given by English and American critics to Joan Peters's book *From Time Immemorial*. The book, which purports to show that there is no historical Arab claim to the land of Palestine, was greeted with generally rapturous reviews in New York, and was much garlanded by the *bien-pensants*. Its publication in London drew four or five essays, from scholars as diverse as Albert Hourani and Sir Ian and David Gilmour, accusing it of plagiarism, falsification and fraud. These essays were extensively sourced and documented, and their circulation here has put the earlier puff-notices in a rather awkward position. I understand that the *New York Review of Books*, which sat out the chorus of raves, is planning a closer look at Ms Peters's methods, procedures and borrowings. And, belatedly, the April issue of the *American Historical Review* has published a review by Robert Olson of the University of Kentucky, deploring the standard and quality of the book and also the endorsements given it by, specifically, Professor Bernard Lewis. There are the makings of a most interesting wrangle among specialists here. The next step really ought to be some reply by Ms Peters to the extremely grave charges that have been levelled against her. She has so far avoided any direct engagement with her chief accuser, Mr Norman Finkelstein. If I were her, I would not let the suggestions he has made go unanswered.

Editors vary

Jeremy Treglown

The Third Annual Conference of the Society for Textual Scholarship
City University, New York

A computerized novel by Robert Pinsky has just been published (*Mindwheel*, available from the Synapse Software Corporation, 5221 Central Avenue, Richmond, California 94804 at $40). Among the exhibits at the 1985 Biennial of the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, are brilliantly coloured phrases on electronic message machines and in neon. Supposing any of these or similar works interest people in fifty years' time, what will textual scholarship make of them?

It certainly doesn't make much of them now, at least in the traditional mode represented by Fredson Bowers's speech two weeks ago at the third annual conference of the Society for Textual Scholarship, whose President he has just become. Bowers, eighty this year, took the opportunity to restate the influential position of his book *Bibliography and Textual Criticism*, first published in 1966, and to launch a lively counter-attack on Jerome J. McGann's *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism* (*TLS*, September 21, 1984).

McGann is among those who are concerned not only about the inability of Bowers's narrowly author-centred scheme of things to deal adequately, if at all, with many new kinds of literary work, but also by its limited appropriateness to much from the past, whether an illustrated poem by Blake, a Shakespeare play, with its collaborative involvement of many people apart from the dramatist, or an apparently more pure literary text which has nevertheless involved the collaboration of, say, an editor. (Pope, for example, as one participant reminded the conference, openly and often acknowledged his debts to Warburton.) McGann is also interested in wider extensions of this social view of artistic composition and authority.

"I regret to say that to me this is the language of literary criticism", Bowers growled in his speech. Besides, the "socialized theory", he argued, isn't supported by enough significant examples to trouble textual critics, whose job – which he was at pains to acknowledge involves flexibility and judgment – is to get past unhelpful "non-authorial accretions", in pursuit of a reading text which best represents the author's intentions.

The argument can and will run on, of course; but any editor preparing a work must sooner or later take decisions – even if the upshot is essentially a variorum, a record of textual process such as Hans Walter Gabler's widely acclaimed 1984 edition of *Ulysses* (*TLS*, July 13, 1984). While Bowers, McGann and others were debating their issues of principle, the first public round was fought of a contest about precisely such practicalities. John Kidd, a young research fellow at the University of Virginia, working on Joyce, has been examining Gabler's edition and says he finds it wanting by any standards of textual scholarship, old or new. It contains, he says, hundreds of errors. He claims that Gabler has ignored impressions of *Ulysses* published during Joyce's lifetime and containing variant readings; and that many of Gabler's own readings, including some substantive ones, are incorrect, or unexplained, or both.

Kidd has been treated by the *Washington Post* as a David taking on the Goliath of the academic establishment (or as a *Washington Post* reporter taking on Nixon), and certainly this is the picture he gives of himself: selling his library, apart from his Joyce books, to finance research expeditions to Europe; excluded at Gabler's behest from the bibliographical conference held a month ago in Fredson Bowers's honour at Charlottesville, where Kidd himself teaches. But that conference was intended, Gabler and others point out, for former colleagues and pupils of Bowers, and for internationally established textual scholars: it was a kind of live Festschrift, to which there was no reason why Kidd, any more than any other post-doctoral student, should have expected an invitation. And as for the Goliath of academe, he – in the persons of Thomas Tanselle, President of the Bibliographical Society of America, Donald Reiman, Chairman of the Conference of the Society for Textual Scholarship, and their colleagues – has been exceptionally co-operative. Tanselle has offered to publish an extended version of Kidd's paper, and Reiman gave a forum for its first draft at a session attended by Gabler, and somewhat cheerlessly presided over by Richard J. Finneran, who, as editor of the Macmillan Yeats, knows what it is to have the stones of young bibliographers slung at him.

Gabler grandly rejected Kiddle criticisms as "all unfounded or misconceived", but none the less seemed rattled, as well he might. The main text of his edition, without apparatus, is intended to go into paperback, and would inevitably become the new standard version, assured of huge sales. Permission has to be given, though, by the trustees of the Joyce estate, who are represented by the Society of Authors. Until Kidd's detailed findings are published, it is hard to judge how much difference they would actually make. If textual scholarship is fully to serve all readers, rather than just a group of academics, the Society should delay any decision. It may take a while; but scholars can already read Gabler's edition in its hardback form in the library; and the rest of us have got by all these years with the Penguin anyway.

Meanwhile, there is comfort for Gabler in a recent near-miss at the Library of America. The new Melville edition in this massive and magnificent series of American literary classics (one of whose advisory staff is Tanselle, himself a Melville editor) has had to be temporarily withdrawn. Someone looking at finished copies noticed that on the title page, the author appeared as Meville.

If sufficient interest and support are forthcoming, it is planned to convene a conference to form an International Association of Literary Semantics: the conference would be held in the summer of 1991 or 1992. Further details can be obtained from Trevor Eaton, Editor, *Journal of Literary Semantics*, Honeywood Cottage, 47 Seaton Avenue, Hythe, Kent, CT21 5HH, England.

Letters

Black British Literature

Sir,–Your reviewer of the new *Oxford Companion to English Literature* (April 26) tells us that the article on black British literature is "intriguing". That is a matter of opinion. What is certain is that, so far as the eighteenth century is concerned, the article is far from satisfactory.

The first name of Olaudah Equiano, chief spokesman of Britain's black community in the 1780s and 1790s, is misspelt. The article states correctly that eight editions of Equiano's *Interesting Narrative* (1789) had appeared by 1794; but that is only half the story, for another six editions were published in the twenty-two years following the author's death in 1797.

Ottobah Cugoano's *Thoughts and Sentiments* (1787) is presented as mainly autobiographical, but it is in fact mainly a polemic against slavery. It is said to contain "anti-slavery passages which may be the work of another hand, or, more probably, be largely dependent on secondary material". No evidence exists for either supposition, and the space devoted to these speculations would have been better used to inform the reader that Cugoano was only the sixth anti-slavery writer to have his work published in this country; that he was the first published African critic of the transatlantic slave trade; and that he demanded not only the abolition of that trade but also the freeing of the slaves, a radical position which hardly any white abolitionist had taken by 1787.

Lastly, contrary to the summary provided in the article, Sake Deen Mahomed's *Travels* (1794) ends with his arrival in England in 1784 and has nothing to say about his subsequent life here.

PETER FRYER.
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Indian English Poets

Sir, – I at first assumed that Anne Stevenson's review (April 19) of recent poetry by K. N. Daruwalla, Nissim Ezekiel and Arvind Krishna Mehrotra was intended as a parody. How else explain the absurdity of comparing African and Indian writing in English to a fifteenth-century Englishman writing in Latin? Everyone knows by now that English is the language of the middle classes in most of the former British colonies and that education and national communications are in English. That Ezekiel, Mehrotra and Daruwalla write poetry in English is no more surprising than Anne Stevenson learning English in America. Only parody can explain a critic who claims sensitivity towards language writing such clichés as "a fascinating state of affairs", "there is much to be said for", the patronizing "almost endearing", the confused nonsense of "paradoxical elegance", etc.

Is it possible in 1985 that your reviewer needs to begin by explaining that there is literature in English in Africa and India? And why should she expect "the formation of an Anglo-Indian" school of poets, since none of the poets being reviewed, nor any of the other significant Indian English poets, have British or European parents? That twenty-five to thirty million Indians have had an English-language education is sufficient answer to Stevenson's question concerning whom "Professor Ezekiel is teaching".

The review is on a par with Stevenson's general information and sensitivity towards language. Daruwalla's use of the "colloquial" and what Stevenson feels to be "overblown" in "The Hawk" are powerful in their context. "The Hawk" of the poem is trained by humans for hunting, just as Daruwalla, a former policeman and intelligence officer, has been trained for violence – "My eyes focused on them / like the sights of a gun". The poems in *The Keeper of the Dead* are the opposite of "romantic" and have little "tenderness". Daruwalla accepts violence as the way of the world and dislikes those who expect it otherwise.

It is not clear whether when she describes Ezekiel's "Nudes 1978" as "detached" Stevenson means that they are independent from each other, or whether she means that they are non-lyrical; but in any case she might have noticed that they consist of fourteen variations on the sonnet form and that such a concern with form is part of the argument of the sequence about relationships between reality and imagination, between sex and love, between the senses and sensuality, between the naked and the nude, and between the materials of art and art. Ezekiel's concern is not, as Stevenson wrongly suggests, the problems of writing English in India, but the relationship between actual life and the ethical, spiritual, artistic and intellectual. "Minority Poem" is not about the use of English in India; it is about how intellectual consciousness, expressed through language, alienates. To describe Ezekiel as "an overstrung talent", "inhibited occasionally by frantic intellectualizing", is genteel attitudinizing.

Mehrotra was published during the 1970s in such non-Indian publications as *Poetry*, *Tri-Quarterly*, *New Letters*, *The Nation*, *The New York Quarterly*, *Chelsea*, *The American Review*, *The American Poetry Review* and the *TLS* (February 3, 1978). I do not remember anyone previously thinking it necessary to patronize his "competence" in using English. While it is true that Mehrotra (one of Ezekiel's students) was interested in surrealism, that was an earlier phase of his work. A more significant influence is Pound's imagism: the later poems in *Middle Earth* are concerned with particularities of Allahabad, where he lives.

I like Anne Stevenson's poetry; but before she writes another review of any Third World or Commonwealth poetry she should read the books more carefully and learn about the contemporary world.

BRUCE KING.
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'Auden in Love'

Sir, – Julian Symons, in his review of Dorothy J. Farnan's *Auden in Love* (March 22) takes the *argumentum ad hominem* to queer lengths, even though he himself has obviously never been weak, unhappily in love or foolish. Auden was the more loving one, often lived in squalor, some of his letters are squalid. From this biography admitted to be ill-judged, Symons leaps to the announcement, not based on texts, that Auden's poems in America (though he extends the period of grace to 1944) "were lacking any true centre of thought and feeling". In fact some of Auden's, and twentieth-century literature's, greatest poems, and not merely "fine" or "accomplished", were written after 1944: and not only fairly short, like "The Shield of Achilles" or "In Praise of Limestone" but a sequence like "Horae Canonicae" of the mid-1950s.

In general, some of man's greatest creative achievements have been made in the midst of squalor, weakness, suffering, disgrace and exile.

HERBERT LOMAS.
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Shakespeare's Sonnets

Sir,–It is good to see extant manuscript texts of Shakespeare's sonnets receiving fresh attention (April 19). One might wonder, however, to what extent Gary Taylor has made a "rediscovery".

Five years ago, in the Shakespeare section of my Volume I, part ii, of the *Index of English Literary Manuscripts* (1980), pp 450–3, I drew attention to twelve manuscript versions of Sonnet 2 and to the possibility that "certain of the texts found in miscellanies of the 1620s and '30s ultimately derive from early MS copies of individual sonnets and have no connection whatever with the 1609 edition". But possibly this is an example of the kind of "academic memoranda" that don't count. Gary Taylor cites eleven manuscripts, "dating from the 1620s and 1630s", as sharing a text of Sonnet 2 "significantly different from that printed in 1609". This is true, as the twelfth manuscript, not mentioned by him – that in St John's College, Cambridge, MS S23 – is substantially similar to the printed version.

The text in Folger MS V a 345 was printed in full, with detailed collations of other manuscripts, in Mary Hobbs's article "Shakespeare's Sonnet II – 'A Sugred Sonnet'?" in *Notes & Queries* (April 1979), pp 112–113. Mary Hobbs suggested a possible reason "for the sudden popularity of the variant version in the 1630s" – a suggestion prompted by the heading in another of the Folger manuscripts: "Spes Altera. A song". The sonnet might conceivably have enjoyed a quite fresh circulation in manuscript, many years after its original publication and after Shakespeare's death, because it was subject to a new musical setting. A comparable example is the version of Sonnet 116 ("Let me not to the marriage of true minds") in a setting by Henry Lawes discovered in one of the Drexel manuscripts in the New York Public Library in 1936 (see Willa McClung Evans's article in *Publications of the Modern Languages Association*, 51.i, pp 120–2). That no musical setting of Sonnet 2 has yet come to light is hardly cause for wonder, considering the chance nature of the survival of so many early-seventeenth-century songs (many of the songs of Henry and William Lawes and John Wilson, for instance, would not be known but for the fact that their own manuscript songbooks happen to be preserved, whereas, on the other hand, the popular composer Nicholas Lanier left no collection of his songs).

Why, out of all of Shakespeare's sonnets, did Sonnet 2 become so popular with the Oxford and Inns of Court students who compiled the miscellanies in which the text occurs with such frequency? – that is, unless a current musical setting provides the explanation. The only other sonnet of which particularly interesting manuscript in the Pierpont Morgan Library and in the chronicle of wasted time"), which occurs in a variant version beginning "When in the Annalls of all wastinge Time" in the Holgate manuscript in the Pierpont Morgan Library and the Robert Bishop manuscript at the Rosenbach Foundation. These two sources give no clue, however, as to any musical connection.

What can now be safely established is that the view of earlier editors, such as Tucker Brook in 1936, that later manuscripts invariably give the text "in various states of corruption", is no longer tenable. Gary Taylor's arguments in favour of the "Shakespearean" character of some of the variant phrasing of Sonnet 2 only reinforce the likelihood that the text which reappeared in the 1620s and 1630s derived from one originally circulated before 1598 "among [Shakespeare's] priuate friends".

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Aspects of Copyright

Sir, – I really must complain about Michele Field's wildly inaccurate review of my book, *A Handbook of Copyright in British Publishing Practice* (April 26).

Apart from the fact that Ms Field, weirdly, appears to blame me personally for the oddities of the 1956 Copyright Act, she blatantly and several times over presents her own misinterpretations as mine.

She makes at least two statements about the contents of my book which are simply false. First, she says that I say that a typist can claim a copyright in her typography: of course this is untrue, and I never said anything so silly. Second, she complains that I have ignored "a tide of opinion that increasingly defines 'copyright' as a right to copy (not necessarily freely, but at least under agreed terms and licences)". What this means is anybody's guess, but if she is talking about normal copyright contracts then I devote two lengthy chapters to them. If she is talking about blanket licensing then I devote a chapter to that.

MAVIS CAVENDISH.
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The Thomas Hardy Society announce the first award, to be made in July 1986, of a biennial prize – of a medal and £100 – for the writer or editor of the book deemed to be the most valuable contribution to Hardy studies. Books published in the period 1984–5 are to be submitted, in three copies for a panel of judges, to the Thomas Hardy Society, 4 Gore Mews, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1JB.

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Basil Blackwell

COMMENTARY

The canon in the can

Stanley Wells

SHAKESPEARE
Titus Andronicus
BBC1

Jane Howell's production of *Titus Andronicus* opens with the image of a grinning skull juxtaposed with the face of an earnest, anachronistically bespectacled boy. The same boy acts as an acolyte in the play's opening rituals. Gradually we realize that he is young Lucius, Titus's grandson. In the play as written, he first appears in the last scene of the third act. Jane Howell adds no lines to the role, but to make the boy a minor participant in many of the scenes in which he does not speak is a brilliant stroke. His wordless reactions to the often bloody deeds form a welcome contrast to the heavily verbalized responses of many of the other characters. His grave compassion reflects and directs our response: he is the viewer on the other side of the screen.

A few other changes help to adapt the play to its new medium. An alteration in the order of the opening episodes ensures that the initial focus is on Titus. A couple of Latin tags are translated, one or two phrases are modernized. After Lavinia, Tamora, Titus and Saturninus have been killed in rapid succession – a point at which the text is, in any case, suspect – Jane Howell cleverly breaks the action. The suggestion of a lapse in time adds dignity and plausibility to the closing passages.

Another interpretative point in the play's last minutes affects the boy. Marcus's words "Behold the child . . ." indicate that the infant son of Aaron the Moor and Tamora is on stage. In a manner that would not be possible in the theatre, Jane Howell has several times shown us close-ups of the half-caste baby, an endearing, touchingly helpless scrap. As Marcus speaks his words, an attendant produces not a baby, but a small black coffin. Young Lucius gazes at it in dismay. He is grieving over it when he is called to take his last farewell of Titus; then, as the play's final lines are spoken, he opens it, revealing the baby's body lying in a bed of straw. Marcus closes the lid, the boy looks towards us, and the image of the skull reappears.

Adaptive techniques such as these are common enough in the theatre; the text is altered here less than in most stage productions. Its notorious horrors are not flinched. We see the horribly bloody stump of Titus's arm after his hand is cut off; we see his sons' severed heads; his daughter, Lavinia, whose hands, too, have been lopped off, visibly carries his hand between her teeth, as he instructs; blood flows as Titus cuts her ravishers' throats.

Unconscious comedy is avoided, but the play's emotional impact is not fully realized. The production's most touching figures are its least articulate ones: the boy Lucius (Paul Davies-Prowles) and Lavinia (Anna Calder-Marshall), all pathos and horror after her tongue has been cut out. The play's tableaux of grief are comparatively unaffecting, partly because the camera dwells too much on the object of suffering, too little on the sufferer – as when Marcus describes his mutilated niece – partly because the performers do too little to move us. The play's rhetoric may need to be scaled down for television, but it must not be evaded. Edward Hardwicke, as Marcus, tries, and fails, to take command of the verse instead of letting it take command of him. Trevor Peacock begins splendidly as Titus, a grizzled, sombre warrior with the authority of experience, sternly stoical in the face of grief. But as his sufferings take the centre of the stage his gravelly voice does not realize the emotion latent in his anguished arias, there is no sense of consolation deriving from the power to verbalize sorrow; nor does he create any impression of madness, real or feigned.

The mixed merits and weaknesses of this production are characteristic of the ambitious series that it brings to an end. Most of the plays, like this one, are set and costumed more or less naturalistically, either in the historical period represented or in the period of their composition. An eighteenth-century *Love's Labour's Lost* is an unsuccessful exception. Sometimes the settings add reality to the text. Such a moment comes in *Titus*, when Lucius remarks that the slaughtered Alarbus's entrails "feed the sacrificing fire". Normally the fire is imagined off-stage; here, it is visible on an altar, and the entrails are sloshed into it. On a larger scale, Jonathan Miller's *Timon of Athens* includes an absorbing reconstruction of a Jacobean masque.

Often, especially in the plays which were filmed when Miller was in overall charge, settings and costumes give pleasure by their beauty, sometimes influenced by paintings: one remembers of the Dutch interiors and deep perspectives of Miller's *Taming of the Shrew*, the baroque richness of Elijah Moshinsky's *Midsummer Night's Dream*. But at other times the impression is rather of an old-fashioned, ill-mounted stage production in the picturesque style. Jane Howell notably departs from the dominant mode in her remarkable mounting of the three parts of *Henry VI* along with *Richard III*, which for much of the time dare to admit that the action takes place in a studio, and which also achieve some stunning effects by using filmic techniques of slowed-down action and superimposed images.

Acting styles vary greatly. The plays' rhetoric is a recurrent problem. Some performances are too big for the small screen: Donald Sinden, as the king, bursts out of the framework of *All's Well that Ends Well*. Other actors, such as Jeremy Kemp playing Leontes, attempt to act at a drawing-room level; their success fluctuates according to their ability to convey inwardness of emotion without sacrificing the verse structure. Some productions record performances that have been admired on the stage – Derek Jacobi's Richard II and Hamlet, Elizabeth Spriggs's delightful Mistress Quickly (in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*), Anthony Quayle's ripe Falstaff (in *Henry IV*) – not always with a sense that the television director has reshaped them to fit into his production. Some admired performers are seen in roles they have not played on stage – Celia Johnson as the Nurse in a generally feeble *Romeo and Juliet* and as the Countess in Moshinsky's excellent *All's Well that Ends Well*, Claire Bloom as Queen Katherine in *Henry VIII* (one of the few productions to be filmed on location), Helen Mirren as an intense but humourless Imogen. And there are inspired pieces of unexpected casting: John Cleese as Petruchio, the Incredible Orlando (Jack Birkett) as Thersites.

The principal weakness of the series is in direction. Some directors, with the art that conceals art, succeed in creating the illusion that the plays are speaking for themselves, and a few – such as Moshinsky in *Coriolanus* – interpret them with real flair and originality. But some plays – such as *King John* – are seriously under-interpreted, and others display no more than routine competence. Comedy, particularly, suffers, perhaps through the absence of a participating audience: even *Pyramus and Thisbe* scarcely raises a laugh, and *The Taming of the Shrew* (stripped of the Sly framework) and *The Comedy of Errors* are reduced to a cosy domesticity.

One aim of the series (which has been widely distributed overseas) is to provide teaching aids in areas where productions of Shakespeare are few and far between. This aim has been fulfilled; some teachers may be grateful that the plays are given usually in fairly full texts and are not eccentrically interpreted. But few of these productions would grip a reluctant viewer by the throat, nor do they comprehensively tackle – let alone solve – the problems of adapting Shakespeare to the television medium.

In mourning

Adam Mars-Jones

The Times of Harvey Milk
Everyman Cinema, Hampstead

During the trial of Dan White for the murders of George Moscone and Harvey Milk (respectively his superior and his hated gay colleague on San Francisco's Board of Supervisors), the prosecution had the bright idea of playing the jury a tape of White's confession. Because White cried, and also omitted some details (the fact that he entered City Hall by a window to avoid metal detectors, the fact that he reloaded his gun between killings), the jury's heart went out to him.

There's a lesson in that. Powerful recorded emotion elicits powerful emotion, the more so since the audience is passive and cannot alter events. A series of crying faces, faces trying unsuccessfully to master emotion, provides *The Times of Harvey Milk*, Robert Epstein's Oscar-winning documentary, with its centre; the film offers its viewers an emotional release, but little in the way of analysis.

Harvey Milk is described not by family and not by lovers but largely by colleagues who were involved in his political campaigns; none of those reminiscing has memories that go back more than a year or two. Milk emerges as an adroit manipulator, but his personality remains enigmatic. His "temper fits" are mentioned, and examples are given of his mischievous sense of humour (phoning up a colleague, with whom he was about to share a panel on television, to say he had lost his earrings), but the film protects his dignity by omitting his career as a clown, which antedated his career as a politician but also overlapped it.

The rather threadbare narration is delivered by the playwright Harvey Fierstein, in a voice that sounds artificially lowered, as if by speaking through a heavy gas. The soundtrack is sometimes crude in its underlining of emotion, as when it accompanies a high-angle shot of Moscone's coffin lying in state with what sounds like an Albinoni pastiche of "Edelweiss" from *The Sound of Music*.

Less forced in their impact are the shots of the candlelight march with which San Francisco's gay community mourned the murders. This style of demonstration seems to derive from rock concerts of the 1970s, but it makes for impressive cinema, and an eloquent contrast to the riots that followed the trial verdict. Britain's equivalent communities, often falling between these two responses of dignified silence and immediate action, have much to envy, even in grief.

The Times of Harvey Milk could have been released any time in the last six years, though admittedly it gains an additional edge from the fact that Dan White has already completed his prison term (and received no psychiatric treatment in prison, although the successful defence attributed his actions to depression). The acclaim with which the film has been greeted says as much about the changed circumstances of gay activism as about the film itself. 1978, after all, the year of the Milk/Moscone murders, was also the year when the illness that came to be known as AIDS was first identified. *The Times of Harvey Milk* harnesses a powerful nostalgia for a time when the issues seemed clear-cut, and when the future looked like a whole series of television debates, in which the radicals would be relaxed and wisecracking and the bigots, sweating in their seats, would be routed by common sense and the facts.

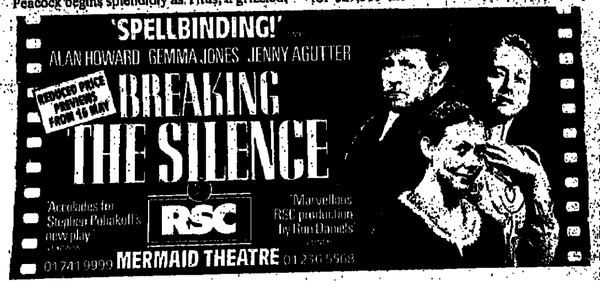
Sale of books and MSS

Sarah Bradford

Despite the presence of the first four folios of Shakespeare's plays and much trumpeting from the auctioneers, the Paul Francis Webster collection sold at Sotheby's, New York, on April 24, contained few surprises. Described by its late owner, an Oscar-winning lyricist, as "a representative group of books and manuscripts which have sparked the mind of man", the collection was a predictable parade of literary stalwarts up to the end of the nineteenth century.

Nothing, however, can detract from the importance of the first folio of Shakespeare (London, 1623). This was a very fine copy with annotations by the Shakespeare editor, Charles Jennens, who owned it from about 1750 until his death in 1773, and it made a record price of $638,200 to the New York dealer, John Fleming, who had originally sold it to Webster. The second folio edition of the plays (London, 1632 [ie, c 1641]), the third and rarest issue, was purchased for $23,100 by an American private collector who also acquired for $27,500 the third folio (London, [1663–1664]), the second issue, the first complete edition containing the first printing of *Pericles*.

A copy of *Don Quixote* (London, William Stansby for Ed. Blount and W. Barret, 1612), the first edition in English of the first part, went for $12,100 to Quaritch who also acquired for $17,600 a set of Defoe. A first edition of the first two cantos of *Childe Harold* (London, 1812) inscribed by Byron to Mrs Dallas, was sold for $7,700, while a fine copy of the three-volume first edition of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (London, 1818) made $17,600 against an estimate of $5,000 to $7,000. Dickens has been fetching high prices recently: here a first edition set of *Pickwick* in the original parts sold for $16,500, and a presentation copy of the same work – "Hans Christian Andersen from his friend and admirer Charles Dickens London July 1847" – was acquired for $22,000 by a New York dealer, while another Pickwick item which most people would not have found particularly desirable – one page of autograph manuscript from Chapter XXVII – was sold for the vast price of $26,400 to an anonymous buyer, prompting speculation as to the potential value of a complete Dickens manuscript novel should one appear for sale.



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COMMENTARY

The remembering game

Mick Imlah

HAROLD PINTER
Old Times
Theatre Royal, Haymarket

Old Times, currently enjoying its first London revival, sets puzzles which have sometimes been found more unsettling or even objectionable than those left unsolved by other Pinter plays. This happens because the play consists of not much more than what its three characters remember, and what they remember is up to them; they can invent, or adapt, or refuse to acknowledge their memories, and they recast each other's.

The characters are all aged about forty, as Pinter was when the play was first produced in 1971. They are Deeley, a successful film-maker; his wife Kate, quiet vague, self-possessed; and Anna, Kate's flatmate when they were twenty, who is revisiting her for the first time at the couple's trendy coastal home. Anna's opening words are a breathless evocation of her cosy time with Kate in "lovely London" – scrambled eggs, gas fires, arty trips – delivered in the retarded idiom of the days when dinner was "an incredibly enormous stew". This incites Deeley to a counter-attack, by which Anna is eventually degraded to the darling of a Brompton Road saloon bar, who offered him views up her skirt one night while he swigged light ale. As such memories chafe and distort and challenge each other in an effort to define a "Katey" that the other can't have, it becomes apparent that Kate is indifferent and even cold to both claimants. The play's first word, "Dark", is her stab at a description of her friend's appearance (Liv Ullmann as Anna, already installed upstage, is obviously and pathetically blonde). While Anna has come specifically to remember Kate rather than to see her, and while they do re-enact one of their girlish scenes together, Kate stays calmly aloof from the remembering game ("I've almost totally forgotten her") until the play's inspired climax. Here, though her memory chooses forms that are impossible, it is unanswerably and violently potent: "I remember you dead", she condemns Anna, turning the play's casual key verb with a vengeance on the latter's plodding liberation from fact. And that – after a subordinate humiliation that reduces Deeley to emblematic sobs – is that.

The main problem facing a director of *Old Times* is the degree to which movements on stage should mime the remembered action. David Jones applies sensible restraint. For example, when Deeley is describing to the black-stockinged Anna the circumstances of looking up her skirt, the two figures on sofas echo – perhaps suggest – the former posture, but he isn't made to stare (too crassly at least) in the same direction. For, as Deeley says of his own sexual and Anna's romantic "gazing", "that's all over now, isn't it?" Jones rightly sees that Deeley's jealousies are induced by pressures and images from the past (he is even made innocently anxious about his own relations with Kate) and there is no repetition of the lesbian fondling inflicted on the play by Visconti (against which Pinter himself led the English complaint). Jones's only superfluous stroke of this kind is the airy blow he has Deeley aim at his wife in a moment of baffled frustration. Otherwise his intelligent reading is well served by the vigorous and amiable performance of Michael Gambon, a Deeley more angry than hurt, who lollops around the stage as if he owned it (he does), except when one twirl lands coffee on the oatmeal carpet.

Even more successful is the pairing of Nicola Pagett (Kate) and Liv Ullmann, who makes her London stage debut in his production. The latter's Scandinavian accent promises to be awkward, but in fact it suits Anna's primly quaint diction ("courageous", "lest") and her supposedly exotic life (a villa in Sicily) uncannily well. Her performance as a whole is a thoroughly convincing repression of mature sexuality in favour of a comfortable infatuation, yearning and defeat. Nicola Pagett's opening dialogue with Michael Gambon is nervously ill-paced, but she stiffens admirably from elfin detachment, through perky protest, to the blasting callousness of the vision with which she has to end the play.

Credos and conventions

Elizabeth Winter

ANTON CHEKHOV
The Seagull
Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith

In presenting Konstantin, a young writer enthralled by the recent discovery of French Symbolism, Chekhov is making use of the most fashionable literary trend of the day. The question of how he, as an established writer in the "realist" tradition, should react to the new experimental art forms ("decadent" in the eyes of many who expected their writers to offer ethical and moral guidance) is worked out in *The Seagull*, where the quarrel between established and aspiring artists is central to the drama. Chekhov's own innovations – seating his actors with their backs to the audience, where they chat in apparent non sequiturs – is less immediately revolutionary, but his brand of dramatic realism has proved an abiding challenge to actors and directors.

The thrust of Charles Sturridge's production at the Lyric is definitely on the side of youth. What is emphasized is the exploitation of the young by the middle-aged, the mocking of the inexperienced by the experienced. Youth is excellently represented by Natasha Richardson as Nina and John Lynch as Konstantin. The chief discovery is Phoebe Nicholls as Masha. Set against the quiet intensity of Nina, she is a petulant, nail-biting teenager who knows what she wants but can't get it. This is a fresh and comic view of the role. But the result is lop-sided: Samantha Eggar as Arkadina is never very far from actressy self-parody, and John Hurt is a rather woebegone Trigorin.

Although the director has brought out the many comic elements in the play successfully, there are two moments in this production which strike a false note. In a play which could be described as Chekhov's literary credo, these undermine the the whole effort. In Act Three, when Arkadina falls on her knees and embraces Trigorin, passionately declaring her physical attachment to him, she fumbles with his trousers. Is she really planning to seduce him in the dinning-room? And at the final moment, Marsha, overhearing Dorn telling Trigorin that Konstantin has shot himself, jumps from the table and vomits.

Such directorial intrusions betray a lack of faith in the text. In his late plays Chekhov scrupulously avoided disruptive moments like this (he no longer allowed himself steam-trains mid-stage) when the audience is distracted by technicalities. As the programme note reminds us, he wrote to his actors "Realistic. . . The stage is art. Kramoskoy has a picture on which the faces are painted beautifully. What would happen if one cut out the painted nose on one of the faces and substituted a real nose for it? The nose would be 'realistic' but the picture would be ruined."

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VOICES 11.00 WEDNESDAYS 4

Struck by intellectuals

Philip Thody

CELIA GOODMAN (Editor)
Living with Koestler: Mamaine Koestler's letters 1945–51
204pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £12.95.
0 297 78531 1

There was something of a contrast between Arthur Koestler and his mistress Mamaine Paget, whom he married in April 1950, when his divorce from his first wife, Dorothy Ascher, finally came through. He was a middle-European intellectual whom historical accident had brought to England and who appreciated us as only those who have experienced European politics from the inside really can. She was impeccably English, the daughter on her father's side of a long line of soldiers and clergymen and on her mother's of a Leicestershire family who owned a coal-mine in Derbyshire and could trace their ancestry back to the ill-starred Admiral Byng. She was brought up first of all in Suffolk and then, after her father's death, by an uncle who had a house near Richmond Park, and whose eccentricities of conduct and belief seem in retrospect to have been quite a good preparation for the strains of living with the author of *Darkness at Noon*.

For Uncle Jack, as Mamaine's twin sister, Celia Goodman, tells us in her introduction, was "a vegetarian, a theosophist and a believer in reincarnation, astrology and fortune-telling". He was also a British Israelite, so that Koestler's more rational but often equally emotive interest in the State of Israel, like his sudden declaration that he believed in miracles, must have evoked some childhood memories in Mamaine. In addition, Uncle Jack was a tyrant whose discovery of any act which contravened his will would provoke him to "an outburst of violent rage". With Koestler, you didn't even need to do that: accidentally banging a saucepan while you were preparing his meal was quite enough, and on one occasion, when Mamaine had agreed to allow a friend whom Koestler didn't like to pay an afternoon call, he went "quite mad with fury" and struck her "a stunning blow on the head".

She still went on to marry him, and to maintain the regular correspondence with her twin sister Celia which Mrs Goodman has now edited with some useful, if not always accurate notes (the Mouvement Républicain Populaire was not "the gaullist party" but a grouping of Catholic progressives) and a very valuable index. This enables one to check up quickly on what Mamaine thought of Albert Camus, whom she describes after showing him round London in May 1948 as "really the nicest man on earth". Like Sartre, however, Camus is also recorded as thinking that "psychology and the empirical sciences had nothing whatsoever to do with philosophy", and as becoming quite emotional in maintaining not only that "nothing of any interest had ever come out of laboratory work" but also that it was "particularly unlikely that anything worthwhile had ever been done in America".

It is perhaps understandable that Mamaine should later opine that "all French intellectuals are crazy". She made an exception for Raymond Aron, who struck her as "the only French intellectual . . . who is really intelligent and clear-headed without being at all mad", but her meetings with André Malraux did little to alter her more pessimistic assessment. Like most of the French writers she and Koestler met in Paris in the 1940s, Malraux drank a good deal. He thus lost any inhibitions he might otherwise have had in making public both his belief that he was "le plus grand philosophe du monde", and his accompanying conviction that he was occupied not in mere political activity but in "making history".

As late as February 1949, Simone de Beauvoir was still capable of telling Koestler, of all people, "how awful the Americans were and how Russia was really the home of the great proletarian revolution", and thus differed from most of Mamaine's and Koestler's other Paris acquaintances only in her view as to who would be responsible for the outbreak of war between Russia and America (which everyone regarded as inevitable). The general opinion was that it would be sparked off by a civil war in France, set off by the Communists and leading to American intervention. The Communist-inspired strikes of 1947 were sometimes seen as a prelude. Mamaine thought that the Russians had let the French and Italian Communist Parties "play their trump cards too soon". Koestler saw this poor timing as "the usual Russian way of abandoning the Comintern in other countries, to which they have never given adequate support".

It was all very exciting, especially when the Koestlers visited Israel in 1948. Mamaine showed how very English she had remained by describing the air-raids as "really a terrible bore", and tells a nice story about Begin allegedly having said: "Poor Mrs Koestler, she's so sweet and charming and always has to hear people being bloody about the English." Sweet and charming is certainly how she looks in the photographs contained in this volume. She was beautiful, she was obviously fascinated by Koestler, and there were occasions when he could be very charming himself. But her account of what he was like at other times makes it clear that it couldn't last, and in September 1951 the couple separated for good. The book closes with Mamaine's letter to Celia of April 8, 1950, in which she writes: "Whatever happens to me from now on – and I have no reason to suppose that anything awful will – I will consider my life has been well spent since I spent six years of it with K."

She died in June 1954, at the age of thirty-seven. Although, as Mrs Goodman says, Mamaine was "passionately fond of babies and children and longed all her life to have some of her own", it was a question on which Koestler felt differently. He won, of course.

Pioneer on a pedestal

Sonya Rudikoff

ELISABETH GRIFFITH
In Her Own Right: The life of Elizabeth Cady Stanton
268pp. Oxford University Press. £17.50.
0 19 503440 6

This new life of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the pioneer American feminist, has been carefully researched, the archives consulted are numerous, Elisabeth Griffith's achievement is surely considerable; but the personal complexities and depths of its subject remain somewhat hidden behind the radical-feminist icon.

Stanton was born in 1815 in New York State, in an area known as "the burned-over district" because of frequent explosions of religious enthusiasm in the early nineteenth century. (New England, New Jersey and Virginia had been the scene of the first Great Awakening in the 1730s; western New York, Ohio and Indiana provided the setting for another burst of revivalism in the Second Great Awakening of the 1820s and 1830s.) As a young woman, Stanton studied at the remarkable "female seminary" founded in Troy, New York, in 1821 by the educational reformer, Emma Willard, and was swept into The Great Troy Revival, presided over by a renowned evangelical preacher, Charles Grandison Finney. The completion of the Erie Canal had transformed a once homogeneous agrarian region; industrial development and social unrest were conducive to religious ferment, and successive waves of millennialism, perfectionism, Mormonism, Fourierism, Owenism, temperance and other reform movements intoxicated the new settlers and immigrants, the mill-hands and merchants. Stanton subsequently involved herself in this world of reform, social experiment and anti-slavery agitation. But it was not until her marriage in 1840 to an abolitionist agent (also converted by Finney, at the Rochester Revival) that she fully committed herself to the new life. Her wedding-trip took her to England to the World Anti-Slavery Convention, where she met the Quaker activist, Lucretia Mott, Wendell Phillips and other abolitionists. It was there, in the tangle of abolitionist politics, that her life's work began: in fact, her feminism was first evoked by the question whether women should participate equally with men in the anti-slavery debate. Motherhood and domesticity intervened for a time, but in 1848 at the first women's rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York, Stanton, Mott and Susan B. Anthony inaugurated the feminist movement.

Stanton's intelligence, oratorical gifts, self-confidence and enthusiasm were to animate the American women's movement for more than fifty years. She professed radical views on marriage, divorce, birth control, child-rearing, women's trade unions, women's legal rights, property rights; she was one of the first to wear Amelia Bloomer's new costume of short skirt and full trousers; she eagerly adopted phrenology and homoeopathy; she followed the reformers' diet proposed by Sylvester Graham, the abolitionist, preacher and temperance agent who introduced Graham flour and whom Ralph Waldo Emerson called "the poet of bran bread and muffins". Hallowed Victorian ideas about "separate spheres" were vigorously attacked as Stanton in her own life demonstrated the possibilities for women's energies – the mother of seven children, the household manager with an absent husband, the tireless speaker, campaigner, writer, organizer, politician and feminist philosopher. At the age of eighty, she published her *Woman's Bible*, a work of biblical commentary that anticipated by fifty years some of the ideas of contemporary feminist theologians.

This biography is thorough in narrating the history of women's suffrage up until Stanton's death in 1902, and it is detailed and well documented in its account of her role in the struggle for the enfranchisement of women. Although efforts were later made to give Susan B. Anthony a larger share in the story, Stanton was clearly the pioneer. Versatile, energetic, forceful, a charming, white-haired grandmother in old age, she is a difficult subject for a biographer to animate, so firmly is she installed on her pedestal in the feminist hall of fame. The narrative is absorbing, but the central figure remains slightly unreal throughout the book. Hagiography predominates in the attempt to domesticate a singular and exigent reformer, unfortunately producing a superficial picture of Stanton. Perhaps an American radical feminist simply cannot be repackaged as a wholesome patriotic woman.

Supporting roles

Philippa Berry

BERNICE KERT
The Hemingway Women: Those who loved him – the wives and others
555pp. Norton. £20.
0 393 017206

In view of Ernest Hemingway's artistic as well as personal commitment to the exposition and celebration of an idea of masculinity of almost Homeric proportions, it seems hardly surprising that the women who figured in both his work and his life have tended to suffer from critical neglect.

Bernice Kert's *The Hemingway Women* is an attempt to set the biographical record straight, by providing detailed information concerning Hemingway's several affairs and four marriages, gleaned from unpublished letters as well as personal interviews with many of the women themselves. Her study provides a useful supplementary volume to Carlos Baker's acclaimed biography of the writer. But, unfortunately, the strictly supporting roles accorded by the adult Hemingway to the women in his life do not amount to compelling reading. Of Hemingway's four "resilient" wives, the only one who emerges as an interesting, indeed fascinating, character in her own right is Martha Gellhorn, a journalist and writer who worked with Hemingway as a fellow war correspondent during the Spanish Civil War, and whose determination to pursue her own career was the chief factor in the collapse of their marriage.

Kert points out, as other biographers have done before her, that Hemingway's overbearing attitude to the women in his life (from his mid-thirties until he died, he would frequently address women of his acquaintance as "daughter") was derived from adolescent feelings of hostility towards his talented and self-assured mother, Grace. In later life he often referred to her as "that bitch" and it is clear that he had felt bitter about his displacement in her affections by a succession of younger siblings. He also resented her professional interest in music, and her domination of her husband. When his father committed suicide in 1928, Hemingway cast his mother in the role of tragic villain.

The part of faithful and uncomplaining companion which Hemingway accorded to the women in his long-term relationships evidently stemmed from a conviction, arrived at in his youth, that a woman's assertion of her independence in a relationship eroded the man's masculinity. Three of his wives, Elizabeth Hadley Richardson, Pauline Pfeiffer and Mary Welch, seem to have played this role with relative success; although all were subjected to a variety of indignities ranging from a series of petty public humiliations (Mary) to infidelity and desertion (Hadley and Pauline). What also emerges from Kert's study is that not only was "Papa" no extravagant present-giver but he was positively tight-fisted over day-to-day issues of domestic expenditure. In fact, Hadley and Pauline (both from wealthy families) bore the larger part of the financial burden in their marriages, while Martha's continuing work as a journalist was due at least in part to Hemingway's refusal to support her.

What might have lent more interest to *The Hemingway Women* would have been some consideration of the striking discrepancy between Hemingway's involvement in long-term relationships, which provided him with a background of emotional security throughout his life (he never ended one marriage without quickly plunging into another), and the tragic, doomed relationships which figure in many of his works, where the experience of an ideal love is often set against the background of what Hemingway associated with "nada": scenes of war and death, of civilization on the brink of collapse. Kert points out, but regrettably does not explore, the fact that the most memorable of Hemingway's heroines were based on women who never became his wives – or even his mistresses – but whom he had idealized from a distance. Catherine Barkley, the doomed heroine in *A Farewell to Arms*, who dies giving birth to the stillborn child of Frederick Henry, was modelled on the nurse Agnes von Kurowsky, with whom Hemingway had had a brief but unconsummated affair while she was nursing him in Milan at the beginning of the First World War. The promiscuous "bitch-goddess" Brett Ashley in *The Sun Also Rises* was inspired by Lady Duff Twysden, whom Hemingway and Hadley met in Paris and Pamplona in 1925. Renata, the idealized "nymphet" in *Across the River and Into the Trees*, was a "portrait" of the young Italian Adriana Ivancich, who in the last years of his life became the chief focus for Hemingway's nostalgic preoccupation with the idea of the daughter he never had. The only major Hemingway heroine who might be said to be based on one of the wives is Maria, Robert Jordan's lover in *For Whom The Bell Tolls*, who had the physical appearance of Martha Gellhorn, but whose timid and yielding character was strikingly at odds with Martha's courageous and decisive personality.

Kert's decision to focus her book on "those who loved" Hemingway also means that she does not consider Hemingway's friendships with actresses, such as Ingrid Bergman and Ava Gardner (both of whom he called "daughter") and Marlene Dietrich (whom he did not). Equally disappointing is the paucity of references to his association with Gertrude Stein, of whom Hemingway wrote in *A Moveable Feast*: "There is not much future in men being friends with great women."

Ernest Hemingway (or the influence and reaction between him and Gertrude Stein) appears in sixty of the 1,920 entries in Ray Lewis White's *Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas: A reference guide* (282pp. Boston, MA: G. K. Hall. $35. 0 8161 8057 1). It consists essentially of an annotated list of "Writings about Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas" arranged (and indexed) chronologically.

A discipline of discords

Christopher Wintle

JOSEPH KERMAN
Musicology
255pp. Collins. £10.95 (paperback, Fontana, £3.95).
0 00 197170 0

In an extended and thoughtful critique of *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* published four years ago, Charles Rosen observed that "scholars of Western music are devided by and large into two groups: historians and analysts. They do not much like or trust each other. Historians who have mastered analytical techniques are rare . . . analysts with a sense of history are perhaps even rarer." Broadly speaking, the remarks are accurate, if regrettably so. Although musical analysts, at least in Britain, have tended to keep their (by and large moderate) views on this division to themselves, some of the historians have been nothing if not outspoken. Jeremy Noble, for example, in the recent *Musicology in the 1980's*, went so far as branding "analytical absolutists" as the "avowed enemies". Likewise, Joseph Kerman, who also contributed to that volume, sees one of the functions of his new, broad-ranging *Musicology* as the "scolding of the formalists". Yet to his credit, Professor Kerman is reluctant to leave the matter there; and the main tendency of his argument is towards a new kind of criticism that brings together, and builds upon, the best of both worlds. It is a timely proposal, and one well worth investigating for anyone who is interested in music as a discipline.

The context of Kerman's argument is "an account of ideas and ideologies as I have apprehended them since the Second World War, in the United States and Britain". And indeed, the whole enterprise is strikingly personal. As an editor of a leading journal, *19th Century Music*, Kerman is well placed to keep his finger on the pulse of his times, and his book has the merit of surveying more material than many musicologists themselves will have explored. From this point of view, it represents a useful, and indeed unique, attempt to map out in English the issues of our day. At the same time, in drawing for his examples upon the fields he knows best – opera, English Renaissance music, Beethoven – he passes over many names which would eminently deserve mention in a more dispassionate survey, just as he avoids some of the most interesting issues of Continental, and even British, musicology: aesthetics, psychology, semiotics, a thoroughgoing sociology, and so forth. This selectivity, however, which licenses an informal and polemical tone, is very much an attribute of the new kind of criticism he advocates, and which, indeed, he finds in Rosen's *The Classical Style*. But his proposals also represent a challenge to other forms of musical discourse; and why Kerman has thought it necessary to mount the challenge at all emerges when this book is placed in its own, broader, professional context.

Modern attempts to classify the very ancient divisions of musical study derive from the eighteenth century, although the various formulations of *Musikwissenschaft* (Chrysander's "musical learning") drawn up a hundred years or so ago have given them their greatest impetus. The Austrian musicologist Guido Adler, for example, made a basic distinction between historical and systematic activities: on the one hand, he placed the studies of notation, forms, instruments and style; and on the other, those of harmony, rhythm, melody, aesthetics, psychology, pedagogy and ethnomusicology. For modern scholars, this distinction inevitably suggests the polarity of diachronic and synchronic modes of thought, which in turn marks the starting point for Howard Mayer Brown's discussion of the subject in *The New Grove*. Brown expands the subject into nine areas, which include, apart from the historical and systematic ones, textual criticism, archival research, lexicography, performing practice, dance and iconography. With the exception of the last two, it is these areas that Kerman is centrally concerned to explore. (Comparably, one may see the five categories proposed by the German theorist Hugo Riemann expanded by Glen Haydon's *Introduction to Musicology*, 1941.)

Not all writers, though, have taken as broad a view of the subject as this. Indeed, to examine the rival claims of the last fifty years is to enter a Borges-like universe, with every specialist area proclaiming itself the centre of the discipline. The historian Manfred Bukofzer saw "the description and origin of styles" as the scholar's main task; the composer (and analyst) Arnold Schoenberg thought that "musicology . . . should be: research into the profundities of musical language"; the ethnomusicologist John Blacking has seen no reason not to approach the music of Mahler in the same way as that of the Zulus. Then again, in America Charles Seeger, polymath and author of a *Tractatus Esthetico-semioticus*, compounded Adler's distinction by differentiating between thinking in purely musical terms, and reflecting about music in purely verbal ones; whereas in Germany, a new study of systematic musicology (1982) finds Carl Dahlhaus calling for a "diffused unity" of social, economic, aesthetic and other factors in approaching the "central category", the musical work itself. In this company, then, Kerman, by seeking pride of place for his new criticism, stands as one among many prophets.

The book begins in earnest with the second chapter, "Musicology and Positivism". It was in the immediately post-war years, Kerman argues, that "the emphasis was heavily on fact. New manuscripts were discovered and described, archives were reported on, dates were established, *cantus firmi* traced from one work to another. Musicologists dealt mainly in the verifiable, the objective, the uncontroversial, and the positive"; although the achievements of these times, he continues, were epitomized by the New Bach Edition, the concentration upon original sources resulted, in the words of Friedrich Blume, in "the belief that only that is true which results from the close textual investigation of the original sources". Nevertheless, Kerman concludes, even then the first signs of a later interpretative phase could be discerned among those who, following Russell, Collingwood and Berlin, began to reflect upon the nature of history, and specifically of music history, itself.

At first sight, there seems something rather grudging about this hand-to-mouth portrait of an era which was as much concerned to perform the newly retrieved music as it was to edit it. Certainly, the editorial preoccupation, which represents the first and most responsible starting-point for any musicological enterprise, was neither new for the time – its roots lay in the nineteenth century – nor was it exhausted with it: witness John Caldwell's recent *Editing Early Music* (1985). It was not even a preoccupation peculiar to historians – analysts have shown themselves to be as much concerned with editions as anyone – and the times were not exclusively bound by it: the 1950s saw plenty of analysis and criticism, not least from the editors of *Music Survey*, Hans Keller and Donald Mitchell. Yet the later chapters show that Kerman is well aware of all this. And although the general point stands, regarding the increased scale (and scope) of textual activity in this era, it may well be that Kerman's polemical exaggeration is bound up with the pedagogical effects of this historical concentration.

In 1961, the medievalist and ethnomusicologist Frank Harrison, then a lecturer in Oxford, preceded a defence of his University's music syllabus with one of the most cogent expositions of the traditional historical view that all music should be understood within its social and cultural context. "The function of musicology for the composer", he went on to suggest, "is to make this record of history available, and so to provide him with a means of enriching his musical vocabulary with whatever ideas his aesthetic sense leads him to choose." This enrichment, obviously, could take place only through analysis; and this, according to Harrison, was to be conducted "in light of the technical and aesthetic principles of the day".

The tendency of these remarks was to place the systematic preoccupations of composers ("creative theory", as Claude Palisca, writing in the same year, called it) outside the remit of musicology altogether. Whereas previously composers had been trained through manuals, often devised by distinguished practical musicians, which abstracted model procedures for harmony, counterpoint and form, now historians developed style studies and collections of historical documents. Instead of the composer Fux's *Gradus ad Parnassum*, for instance, the text from which classical composers learnt preliminary counterpoint, came the historian H. K. Andrews's *The Technique of Palestrina*, the specificity of which inevitably entailed a severe restriction in its range of application.

The enduring merit of the historical approach has been, ironically, to focus analytic attention as never before on the music *per se*; its disadvantage has been to minimize the need for a more broadly conceived theory, appropriate either to the early training of composers, or for the explication of the norms underlying any substantial body of music. To discuss a work of Beethoven, for example, is not only to study the music afresh in the light of its contemporary documentation, but also to pursue the subsequent history of its reception (and not only in the theoretical sphere), before forming a modern synthesis that cannot but share in the motivations and preoccupations of its own day. Yet it is just this kind of composite programme, which erodes so much of the boundaries between the synchronic and the diachronic, that has been neglected, in Harrison's Oxford, as in many British institutions still.

Kerman's own reaction to the work of those who have attempted to redress this state of affairs is typical, one rather suspects, of a great many historical musicologists on both sides of the Atlantic. He is too thoughtful not to want to come to terms with a relatively new body of analytical literature he acknowledges to be powerful, yet shares too few of the (composer-orientated) aspirations of theorists and analysts not to feel alienated by what he reads. Certainly, his significantly entitled third chapter, "Analysis, Theory and New Music", finds little to celebrate other than the early writings of the American Leonard Meyer. These appear to gratify a craving for an aesthetic absolutism that even Tovey's "naive listener" was unable to sustain. Indeed, it is curious that Kerman does not pursue his lifelong championship of Tovey through these pages, since it is his "Tovey epigones" (Peter Evans, for example, or Robin Holloway) who have done most to perpetuate the kind of humane criticism he would surely applaud.

His most disparaging comments, though, are reserved, perhaps predictably, for the Austro-German analysts of the last hundred years, and especially for one of the most influential of them, Heinrich Schenker. Of course, Schenker's method of searching below the surface of musical structures for deeper, governing principles which, once uncovered, guide the analyst (and performer) in the interpretation of the reconstituted surface was always destined for a troubled reception in the empirically conscious English-speaking world: just as was the case, in a broader cultural sphere, with the German idealist philosophy in the nineteenth century. But Schenker's concerns have been taken too seriously by too many intelligent musicians (of whom too few are acknowledged here) to be dismissed with the gibe "idiosyncratic flies and casts"; especially when the accompanying critique of Schenker's analysis of Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" theme (a slender enough example) is so fundamentally uncomprehending (*pace* Kerman, when a musical entity is stated twice, it is of the essence for musical, as opposed to mathematical logic, *not* to consider the second statement equivalent to the first.)

This does not mean to say that Kerman is not entirely right to challenge the tacit assumption of some "neo-Schenkerians" that the principles by which they analyse are self-sufficient: there are indeed many intra and extra-musical issues other than those they describe which are necessary for the explication of even quite simple structures. Some of these Kerman has listed elsewhere. Moreover, even the reductive paring away of surface elements may entail serious musical problems, as Schoenberg and Berg used to insist. But the scolding of the formalists in this context presupposes two failures of historical imagination: on the one hand to place Schenker's preoccupations adequately in the context of their own times; and on the other, to recognize that the tripartite text, to which he devoted the best part of his life, *Neue Musikalische Theorien und Phantasien*, is itself a broadly conceived style study (and in our own times might well have been called *The Tonal*

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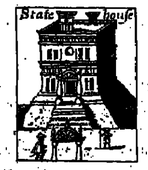

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Style or *The Technique of Tonal Music*). As such, it belongs to the historical side of Adler's scheme of musicology. The fact that, whatever its limitations, it may also be used for the training of composers, and thus justify inclusion in the systematic category, represents a significant, and modern, triumph of mediation.

Kerman's arguments, even at their most tendentious, are nevertheless shot through with good observations. It is perfectly true, for example, that it is the problems of modern music that have driven its analysts back into the nineteenth century (and in some cases beyond), just as it is true that a more pristine anti-intellectualism lingers among historical musicologists in Britain than in the United States, whether or not its source is accurately located in the alleged unwillingness of the late Thurston Dart to venture into criticism or engage in history *per se*. These and other issues are expanded in the last three chapters, which are given over to "Musicology and Criticism", "Ethnomusicology and Cultural Musicology" and "The Historical Performance Movement" respectively. Here, Kerman is evidently more at home. For his sketch of a new criticism (and since the whole of *Musicology* seems to represent an apologia for his life's work, it remains no more than a sketch), he cites the work of Edward Lowinsky, rooted in the older European tradition of *Geistesgeschichte*, as well as Leo Treitler's critical re-examination of the models by which the Grand Design of music history has hitherto been revealed – the assumptions of cause-and-effect, for example, or the revelations of the growth, efflorescence and decay of the various forms and styles.

In all this, there is a great deal that is sympathetic and refreshing. Yet as many questions are raised as are answered. Good criticism, for example, ordinarily shows a reasonably acute recognition of the interests and level of understanding of its readership. But the "comprehensive interpretation of what a work of art *means in all its contexts*" that Kerman advocates will in most cases yield so substantial and diverse a body of information as seriously to prejudice the effectiveness of whatever original insights it may offer. Selectivity is a critical virtue that cannot be sacrificed so readily for the sake of universal professional appeasement. And, indeed, when one turns to Kerman's study of *The Beethoven Quartets*, one finds no *necessary* connection (and no critical connection at all) between his analytic description of the Op 135 quartet and the composer's problems with his nephew Karl. Then again, the rejection of evolutionary models for the writing of history should not be so comprehensive as to overlook those composers (Webern, for instance) whose (self-declared) aesthetics presupposed, among other things, the synthesizing and surpassing of earlier models.

Ironically, it is just these kinds of question that prompt the thought that it might have been enough for Kerman merely to have aired the issues of musicology, without seeking some visionary outcome for the enterprise as a whole. In fact, he more or less does just this in his account of "The Historical Performance Movement", where he steers well between the Scylla and Charybdis of, on the one hand, "authentic performance", and, on the other, an interpreter's use of music as "a vehicle to express his own personality". When the various counter-claims have been balanced, he argues, it is still necessary to recognize that historical performance "is an attitude of mind rather than a set of techniques applied to an arbitrarily delimited body of early music", something as relevant to Boulez as to Machaut. Only his berating of theorists (yet again) for not offering "an explicit performance model for music already in the repertory" suggests an alienation from the problems involved. What, for example, would an "explicit performance model" be for *Die Walküre*? And, since we rightly expect performance practice to be constantly self-renewing, what conductor worth his salt would ever want to be bound by it? (Nor does historical documentation suggest that any contradiction should be seen between an analyst's definition of the *matter* of the relationships existing among the elements of a piece, and a performer's inevitably more individual idea about the *manner* in which they should be projected.)

Kerman opens the "Coda" to his book with an invocation of a virulent, and, for some of those who participated, rather saddening exchange of letters in the *TLS* twelve years ago, on the then strained subject of Anglo-American musicological relations. Since that time, he has very reasonably discerned an easing of suspicions, and a greater propensity towards co-operative ventures. Certainly, the age seems passed when the Editor of a previous *Grove* dictionary (1954) could describe the term *voice-leading* as a "German/American neologism that must on no account be allowed to intrude into the English language", if the language "is to be allowed to remain . . . precise and independent". (*The New Grove* diplomatically avoids all possibility of offence by providing no more than a cross-reference to "part-writing" – an inadequate synonym for the term – an entry which turns out upon inspection not to exist at all.) Kerman may underestimate the independence of British musicology, and the extent to which it is concerned with the reception of Continental as well as American influences, but his willingness to be even-handed over the relations is one of the more encouraging aspects of his work.

Even so, Kerman's Californian perspective seems responsible for a lack of focus at various stages of the book in dealing with facts and emphases. Hans Keller, for example, by Kerman's token a critic more than a "scholar", did not virtually abandon words once he had devised a purely musical form of analysis in the mid-1950s (far from it, in fact); if the truly innovative performers of the traditional repertoire in postwar years are indeed to be whittled down to just three names, these should not properly include Boulez, for whom mastery has never been claimed outside the modern sphere (the others are Maria Callas and Glenn Gould); whether or not Peter Maxwell Davies is the "strongest" of the "Manchester school" composers, he himself acknowledges (the unmentioned) Alexander Goehr as the dominant influence of his student days: this influence is in turn bound up with the propagation of Schoenberg's traditional theoretical ideas, which, as Kerman quite accurately points out, have had greater influence in Britain than in the United States. There are many further points of this nature, which will doubtless be taken up by other reviews.

None of this, however, should disguise the fundamentally sympathetic nature of Kerman's quest. In the historical as well as the systematic spheres, oppressive, if well-intentioned orthodoxies, have in the past certainly resulted in entrenched and divisive attitudes, whose moment should now be over. How to retain the benefit and experience of earlier rigours in the more fluid, expanding discipline which musicology is becoming is something that, of course, will require example more than admonishment. But Kerman knows this too; and the "hopes for motion" with which he closes are fittingly, and attractively, inconclusive.

Borrowing and burgeoning

William Ashbrook

PHILIP GOSSETT
Anna Bolena and the Artistic Maturity of Gaetano Donizetti
183pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £20.
0 19 313205 2

Anna Bolena was the first of Donizetti's operas to make his name known in the major opera centres outside Italy. It used to be mindlessly repeated that in this work the composer had escaped from the tighter grips of the Rossinian conventions, finding overnight, as it were, his own voice. Only recently has the inadequacy of this view become general knowledge.

Philip Gossett's book tackles some aspects of this preconception directly, mainly by his detailed scrutiny of the revisions in Donizetti's autograph, concluding that "in practically every case examined, Donizetti's instinctive formal decisions return to Rossinian models, the common denominators of Rossini's style". As Professor Gossett acknowledges, further explorations of this field remain to be carried out. We need to know more about the relationship of *Anna Bolena* to its twenty-nine predecessors in Donizetti's *oeuvre*, for that score contains a number of self-borrowings from these earlier operas. It would be instructive to see clearly how *Anna Bolena* may stand as the culmination of Donizetti's previous practice. As Gossett says: "An urgent task of Donizetti research in general should be careful study of the problem of self-borrowing." Perhaps an equally urgent task is suggested by the path-breaking album produced by Opera Rara, *A Hundred Years of Italian Opera, 1800–1810*, which demonstrates our ignorance of Rossini's indebtedness to his immediate predecessors.

This study of the evolution of *Anna Bolena* and of Donizetti's coping with the received conventions of that time forms the first volume of a series of Studies in Musical Genesis and Structure which, it is planned, will examine key works by a representative cross-section of major composers. Gossett's searching and scholarly look at an important score presents a coherent mass of concrete detail, usefully illustrated by numerous examples. It is no exaggeration to claim that this book launches a new era of Donizetti studies, whereby close examination of his mature works can demonstrate Donizetti's central role in the development of Italian opera during the first half of the nineteenth century.

Not the least provocative aspect of Gossett's work is his consideration of the composer's motives for revising certain numbers during both the compositional process and the first run of the work. Particularly illuminating is his discussion of Donizetti's efforts to escape from the balanced repetitions of musical periods in the cabalettas of three duets. Here, surely, is the key to the asymmetries that occur frequently in his later works. Over and over again one wishes that Gossett could have found occasion within the stated limits of his subject to explore the implications of Donizetti's practice in *Anna Bolena* for that in his later operas.

Gossett's study is an amplification of a stimulating paper he presented at the Donizetti conference held at Bergamo in 1975. Some of the material presented here was published in Italian translation in the *Atti* of that conference (Bergamo, 1983). This book, however, contains new material and a re-thinking of some of his judgments, and ought to be considered a fuller, more balanced account of his subject than his first version. It fills a needed gap. It leaves us thirsting for more.

A teeming libretto

David Kimbell

JULIAN BUDDEN
Verdi
404pp. Dent. £13.50.
0 460 03165 1

The format of the Master Musicians series has come under a certain amount of criticism in recent years. But I wonder if there are many better gauges of the real state of British musical scholarship than these volumes, in which established authorities address themselves, not to their fellow experts, but to the intelligent, non-professional music-lover, the concert-goer or opera-buff who wishes to take a more informed interest in the music he hears and the men who wrote it. Julian Budden is an ideal person for such a task: a leading figure in Verdi research for the last twenty years, author of the standard work on his operas, a member of the editorial board of the new complete edition, he has an unsurpassed command of the whole spectrum of international Verdi scholarship. At the same time he is an experienced and expert broadcaster who can spin a compulsive yarn, and present the most abstruse tale of changing versions or contractual disputes in easy, fluent prose.

Unsurprisingly, his new book on Verdi has all the makings of one of the most valuable titles in the series. His editor has been generous with space (allowing significantly more than for recent Master Musicians volumes on Bach, Bartók or Wagner), Budden himself writes with exceptional succinctness, and the result is a quite remarkably comprehensive book, every page of which is packed with material. Some indeed are too packed; several times in the chapters on Verdi's life I found myself thinking of those frantically teeming librettos that the composer set in the 1840s and 1850s. The following paragraph-opening is an example of this *Trovatore*-like *stancio*: "During this time Verdi's interest was ever more engrossed in his estates. In July 1857 he wrote to his friend the sculptor Luccardi in Rome for his advice in buying two large Friulian horses (Friuli was Luccardi's native province). But he had kept the Neapolitan management dangling too long over a possible *King Lear* for him to let them down. . .". But as in *Trovatore*, the breath-taking narrative is itself compulsive. What is more, it is continually varied in pace by *arioso*-like lingerings that flood with illumination certain of the issues that crop up in the course of the story – *aperçus* on individual operas, on professional colleagues, on aspects of the musical life of the period. Not infrequently the action is suspended altogether while Budden embarks on a reflective excursus. These, on such matters as music publishing, Verdi's librettists, the Milanese *scapigliati*, are among the most valuable pages in the book.

Prospective readers need not fear that the chapters on the music simply reduplicate or *précis* what Budden has written before. He has continued to study, to ponder and to reassess the scores, and in several passages, notably on *Un ballo in maschera* and *La forza del destino*, the new book deepens or clarifies the insights offered in his earlier writings. Even where he draws most obviously on his *magnum opus*, in discussing *La Traviata*, for instance, the different organization of the material in the new book puts the material in a fresh perspective.

Each reader will have his own list of corrigenda, his own views of where the author has erred in fact or in judgment. From my own – a brief one – I mention only my conviction that he has not got the measure of that most enigmatic of composers, Rossini. One might legitimately wonder who has. But the evidence for an assessment of Rossini's work (and no book on nineteenth-century Italian opera is complete without such an assessment) seems injudiciously presented. There is not much sense of "cool agility" in the writings of Heine or Stendhal or Balzac on Rossini; and if he is to be belabboured with the insults of Berlioz and Weber, might he not be permitted to state his own attitude to the tricky topic of what constitutes "dramatic music"?

A distinguished book is unfortunately marred by signs of haste and insufficiently rigorous editing. There are too many trifling misprints and, one, the mixing-up of examples 57 b and c, which muddles the discussion of the recurring themes in *Aida*. There are a number of loose ends that obscure the narrative: for example, we are never explicitly told what Verdi's "account of 1879" is (pages 16 and 18); and it is not clear that *Stiffelio* is the subject of the second paragraph on page 71, or that *Aroldo* was the result of the revision (page 74). Someone should have persuaded the author to discipline his penchant for supererogatory erudition and abstruse allusion. A single brief paragraph on *Aida* manages to accommodate references to "the Greek 'ananke'", "Dantesque tercets" (inaccurately), and "a medieval 'Vehmgericht'"; and when Budden throws off a "witness the respective cases of Gobatti and Catalani" or a "like Edward III in Donizetti's *L'Assedio di Calais*", how many readers, eyes, I wonder, are going to light up in instant recognition of a pertinent and illuminating allusion? Finally the appendices include a glossary of nineteenth-century operatic terms. In principle this is a most welcome addition to the traditional Master Musicians appendices. But "canzone", "puntatura" and "scena a faire" are missing from it, and in any case its value is rather diminished by the total lack of any references to it, even to the fact of its existence, in the body of the text.

Smart but smarting

Blake Morrison

JONATHAN PRICE
Everything Must Go
45pp. Secker and Warburg. £5.95.
0 436 38704 2

Jonathan Price, who died at fifty-four just weeks before the publication of this, his first and – we must presume – only book of verse, is certain of at least a footnote in literary history because of his contribution to the politicking and poetics of the 1950s. He might almost be called the Movement poet who never made the Movement, for though he epitomized many of the group's values he was not included in Robert Conquest's influential anthology *New Lines*. This was not altogether surprising, since Price was younger than even Thom Gunn; and he did later appear in the more catholic *New Lines 2*. On the other hand, he had begun publishing in favoured Movement places – George Hartley's magazine *Listen*, Anthony Hartley's *Spectator* book pages – from as early as 1954, and he wrote a witty, cerebral, logic-chopping verse which, if not up to Empson standards, was certainly up to the Empsonian poems of John Wain. It is indicative of critical indifference to an admittedly slender output that his work should be gathered up only now.

A useful chronological note appended by Price shows that the work in *Everything Must Go* falls largely into two periods: of thirty-four poems here, most date either from the Movement phase or from the last few years. The best-known and most anthologized of the early poems is "A Considered Reply to a Child", in which a toddler's embarrassing declaration at the dinner table, "I love you", prompts the poet to reflect on his own emotional inhibition and even coldness: "I'm that smart / I can give everything and keep my heart." There is a hint, in that consciously brittle boast, of John Wain and early Donald Davie. So, too, "A Manner of Speaking" has the look of a poem trying to be a Movement manifesto:

> "Where are these poets' hearts?" a reader cries.
> Not withered, but not worn upon the sleeve
> Of singing robes. Some things they choose to leave
> To bards who wield their pens between their
> thighs . . . .

Such poems look like tired exercises now, even if the terms of the argument continue to be voiced: today it is the Martian generation, not the Movement one, which is charged, often ignorantly, with lacking "feeling". Price had his prepared answer – "One shuns the shouting, trusts the speaking voice" – and his tactic was to affect emotional nullity while writing love poems that are disquietingly gloomy, even devastated. The stone-carving of a woman, "hysterically tense", reminds him of "someone I had known"; a woman whose fate was to be a comforter of men, "all the world's wet nurse", pays a heavy price – "I met her yesterday, quite dead"; or again – "These lovers grew together in the sun, / While a dark root a dark root gripped and bound." Amid all Price's conversationalism, that repetition carries real unease, and Philip Larkin in his dust-jacket tribute to Price is right to mention the "poignant feeling" which lies at the back of his wit and ingenuity. The best of the early work is not, however, a love poem but "Case Remanded", in which the unspecified court trial, with its accusations, confessions, guilt and sorrow, attains a sinister, allegorical, almost Kafkaesque force.

Mortality seems to have preoccupied Price long before the diagnosis of his own fatal illness, and a refrain from the early "Augury" – "There is no means of checking the decay" – is itself an augur of the later poems. A lustful old man stares in the mirror at "broken veins, pouches below the eyes". A visit to Dunwich's receding cliff inspires the thought of "all the dead ones lying farther out". Joseph Wright of Derby, in his painting "Experiment with an Air Pump", is judged to have made an art "out of suffocation" – "there are lots / Of people like oneself going down fighting / For the last time, fighting for the last breath". Elsewhere Price makes poetry out of conversational clichés. Indeed, as the *memento mori* in his book's title suggests, this is his chief technical innovation among the stock-square quatrains and stiff-lipped pentameters – an ability to find suggestive and usually morbid overtones in the colloquial and banal: "you never know", "what next, pray", "good grief". *Everything Must Go* ends with a poem in which the crabs in a boy's bucket become *the* crab, cancer, gorging on the author's liver. It stands as an uncomfortable finale, to be set alongside the epitaph which Price chooses for himself in another poem, "Kilroy Was Here": "*Someone was here, wrote something, and is dead.*"

Quiet and disquiet

Dennis Walder

PATRICK CULLINAN
The White Hall in the Orchard and other poems
42pp. Cape Town: David Philip; distributed in the UK by Global Book Resources, 7 Bury Place, London WC1A 2NU. Paperback, £4.15.
0 86486 008 0
DOUGLAS LIVINGSTONE
A Rosary of Bone
Second edition, with more poems
42pp. Cape Town: David Philip; distributed in the UK by Global Book Resources.
Paperback, £3.80.
0 86486 004 8
OSWALD MTSHALI
Fireflames
63pp. Rex Collings. Paperback, £4.50.
0 86985 501 8

Patrick Cullinan is a South African poet whose work ought to be better known. His third published collection, *The White Hall in the Orchard*, reveals a mature and distinctive voice, dry, wry and sensitive, and subjects ranging from urban Johannesburg to the Tuileries, from the Highveld to the cliffs of Corniglia. His central concern is the expression of a characteristically modern sense of disquiet, which he conveys with apparently casual wit – "a sleight of hand / below the surface", as it is put in "Venice".

"Venice" might be, but isn't, a translation of Montale, free "versions" of whose poems make up half this collection. Like Montale – more an inspiration than a source – Cullinan sidesteps the factional rhetoric of his native land, preferring subtlety, irony and indirection. He is too responsive a poet to ignore what is happening, or about to happen; yet it is in the small dislocation of mood, the image half-seen, that he finds his intimations of menace. The opening poem, which provides his title, also provides the dominant note:

> To have love and then lose it:
> the white hall in the orchard
> lying with leaves it has stripped
> and the storm moving away.

The scene is evoked with sharp precision, yet it resonates until the realization comes that it is more than an apt metaphor for personal loss: a hint of that future which looms on the horizon of white consciousness. Elsewhere, the dust in the wind suggests spring, "with its mortal odours, / a flicker of red in the hills at night" ("Escarpment"), the summer sun maddens the city streets until the jacarandas' "wasted petals . . . explode and stink" ("Johannesburg November"); even silence seems "so acute the garden quivers" ("Mimesis").

There are poems which escape this brooding apprehension: elegiac, lyrical, they contemplate the birth of a child, cattle grazing, yellowing photographs, a blackbird arriving too late for its morning meal. But Cullinan finds himself drawn back again and again to what threatens his ordinary world, to what is "Beyond what I can see and touch . . . the other side of that death perhaps / we've carried within us for years and years". This gives his poetry a force and point lacking in the latest collection from his better-known compatriot, Douglas Livingstone. *A Rosary of Bone* (first published in 1975 but now enlarged by fifteen new poems) is a very accomplished, confident meditation on the vicissitudes of desire – most amusingly explored through Livingstone's Donne-ish persona, "Giovanni Jacopo".

Livingstone's wit and craftsmanship carry him a long way. But "Humans with / agonies render me unsound", this detached, scientific observer confesses; and we must look elsewhere for a response to the broader life of his countrymen. Over the past fifteen years new, more urgent voices have been raised – at first in little magazines such as *Staffrider*, but now in individual volumes – protesting the agonies of the urban black experience. One of the first, but quietest, belonged to Oswald Mtshali, whose *Sounds of a Cowhide Drum* (1971) established his reputation overnight.

But Mtshali's latest, *Fireflames*, dedicated to the "brave schoolchildren of Soweto" and banned on its first appearance in South Africa in 1980, suggests a talent misused in the service of laudable aims. Aligning himself with what he sees as the changing consciousness of his people has led Mtshali to abandon the quieter, ironic mode of his earlier work for rhetorical expostulation on "the Black man's life, / the life of every black soul". The "skulking perpetrators" of "dastard deeds" condemned here have identified the nature and function of these poems by banning them. These are rallying cries and laments, suitable for public utterance, perhaps; but they lie inert on the page.

Valerie Gillies's particular gift in *Bed of Stone* (63pp. Edinburgh: Cannongate. £5. 0 86241 060 6) is a sudden freshness of vision, an unexpected quality of phrasing which gives life to otherwise unexceptional subject matter. *Bed of Stone*, her second collection, is named after, and dedicated to, a greyhound – an "unexpected wonder / photodynamic as fire". "Photodynamic" nicely suggests the flash of enlightenment which occurs when a strikingly original phrase disturbs the generally cautious diction of these poems. Gillies writes particularly well of childhood, treasuring the child's gift for primary experience. Other poems in *Bed of Stone* attempt to present adult experience with a familiar immediacy. Gillies's weaknesses emerge in political poems. Her responses to public events like the H-block hunger strikes ("To each man his guing") or Mrs Gandhi's defeat in the post-emergency election of 1977 seem consistently ill-considered, overstated and strident.

Tim Dooley

The Seneschal

> The sun had long time baked the furniture,
> Thrown inadvertent insects on their backs;
> The myths of hangings faded to a blur.
>
> Weeds flowered at oddish angles from the cracks
> Of chimneys. In the cellars crimson wine
> Turned to a rusty acid in its racks.
>
> Yet still down passages, not a ghost, his fine
> Nose raised, the seneschal of culture goes.
> With his great office now he must combine
>
> Laundering of linen, emptying of pos.

ROY FULLER

P J KAVANAGH
on Sheep's Lib:
"He sat and watched me, his yellow eyes with their strange horizontal pupils particularly hard on the nerves. He revolved grass in his jaws, as Clint Eastwood chews on his cheroot. When I stood back to admire my work he slowly got to his feet, cheroot, as it were, still in his mouth, and *charged* the fence I had just built."

DUNCAN FALLOWELL
on sex:
"The corruption of innocence, morally reprehensible in our society, is nonetheless a most necessary task if life is to continue . . ."

PEREGRINE WORSTHORNE
on being described as an ageing dandy:
"Nobody would describe an old building in good repair as 'ageing'. Only a disused and crumbling dump with cracked paint and peeling plaster gets described as 'ageing' . . . for future reference let all authors know that just as the preferred appellation for furniture of a certain age is *antique*, and for monuments, *ancient*, and for wine, *vintage*, and for soldiers, *veteran*, and for clergymen, *venerable*, that for hacks is, for want of a better word, *seasoned*."

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Backwater on the boil

David Montrose

MILES GIBSON
Dancing with Mermaids
196pp. Heinemann. £8.95.
0434291315

According to parapsychologists, poltergeist activity usually occurs in the vicinity of a disturbed adolescent. But in Miles Gibson's second novel – following his accomplished *The Sandman* – someone of more mature years serves as the epicentre of strange happenings. The setting is Rams Horn, a coastal backwater in Dorset. Despite fifteen years' widowhood, the local crystal-gazer, Mrs Clancy, is obsessed with her late husband, a sailor, whose ghostly return she has long awaited. Both this obsession and her supernatural powers derive from sexual frustration: Captain Clancy had been a formidable stud. Early in the novel, while trying to contact him, she accidentally invokes a swarm of demons. Ensuing events, however, being more comic than horrific, owe little to Stephen King.

The demons promote mischief by manipulating the repressed desires of various inhabitants of Rams Horn. Two pubescent boys, Vernie and Smudger, have for months been infatuated with the dishy mother of a third boy, Sickly. Now, with Sickly's supposed assistance, they take action, concocting improbable (and conspicuously unsuccessful) schemes to render her insensible and at their mercy. Mrs Reynolds, another frustrated widow, takes a lodger: Matthew Mark Luke Saint John, a concupiscent African sailor. Within days, the two are conducting an affair so hectic that a fortnight passes without their leaving the house. In the meantime, lonely Dr Douglas's secret passion for Mrs Clancy slowly approaches the point where it will demand expression.

Half-way through the book, ominous developments take place. Vernie and Smudger realize that Sickly had always intended them to fail, and they plot gruesome reprisals. Sickly disappears. Mrs Reynolds discovers Matthew *in flagrante* with Polly, her teenage daughter. In revenge, she gives him severe food-poisoning via a salad spiked with toadstools. Recovering, he goes back to sea. Polly disappears the next day.

All, though, seems to end happily. Certainly, Sickly and Polly turn out not to have suffered any dark fate, while Dr Douglas, aided by a love potion, achieves the conquest of Mrs Clancy, thereby curing her frustration and apparently restoring normality. But, as in *The Sandman*, Gibson employs a false dénouement. That novel looked set to conclude with its narrator, a mass murderer, abandoning his "career", only to indicate in the last paragraph that his homicidal mania, though dormant, was not extinct. In similar fashion, *Dancing with Mermaids* suggests that things are not, in fact, as they were before: peculiar events will recur.

Less black than *The Sandman*, and possessing a softer edge, *Dancing with Mermaids* is written with all the aplomb of its predecessor. Gibson has created an admirable cast of characters, and a particularly nice line in subsidiary oddballs: the man-hating herbalist, Mrs Halibut, supplier of Mrs Reynolds's baneful fungi and Dr Douglas's aphrodisiac; the one-time lighthouse-keeper, Tom Crow, who roams the hills at night, awaiting extraterrestrial visitors; and Charlie Bloater, who lives on a boat in the middle of a cabbage patch. The disappointment is that Gibson does not maintain the novel's impetus. The final third of the book, instead of building towards a fine pitch of bizarrerie, represents something of a levelling-out; the finding of the absent children, meanwhile, occurs in distinctly anticlimactic circumstances. This does not make *Dancing with Mermaids* a poor novel by any means. *The Sandman*, though, demonstrated that Gibson can do better.

Deutsche Erzählungen/German Stories: A bilingual anthology, translated and edited by Harry Steinhauer, includes stories from Goethe to Böll (451pp. University of California Press. £22.95; paperback, £8.25. 0 520 05049 5).

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NTL

Dower House secrets

Toby Fitton

JOHN BRODERICK
The Rose Tree
191pp. Marion Boyars. £8.95.
0714528242

A village near Bath; a cosy neighbourhood devotes itself in the snug bar to discussion of a couple recently arrived at the local big house. The tone and manner are recognizable from *The Archers*. Some of the personnel have their counterparts, too: a prosperous victualler with business interests outside his pub, and an antique dealer with the full range of gossip characteristic of his trade. This is not Ambridge – not least because of the dealer's sexual inclinations – but the intensity of village gossip is much the same.

The mysterious couple who have set up house are an Irish father and daughter, rich and reclusive, with only an Alsatian dog of fine pedigree accompanying them. They arouse the suspicions of the village by their lavish purchases of antique furniture from outside – thus wisely avoiding the blandishments and tittle-tattle of the local emporium – and by a seclusion so intimate as to lead the gossips into speculation about incest. A fair amount of detailed information about the day-to-day life of the fascinating couple is soon adduced, but many mysteries remain, impenetrable both to local tradespeople and to an inquisitive but well-meaning local noblewoman who befriends them.

It is one of the strengths of John Broderick's novel that he succeeds in guarding the Dower House secrets until the final pages. Hints are quite heavily dropped as we learn of the daughter's recurrent nightmares, and her horror of blood is gradually revealed as the tale advances. Lady Violet, the nosey widow with a heart of gold, married for love and begat widely different sons. One of them is a polite, conventional farmer, who is devoted to the shy Irish girl. Why, then, does she reject his overtures but fall in with every bullying whim of his socially miscegenated labourer brother, a grade one lout showing the old Adam in every hair of his tanned and manly chest? Why her attachment to the well-kempt wolf dog that seems socially and morally more discerning than its owners? Such questions are skilfully posed.

The Rose Tree is conceived and written, clearly, not as a mystery story but as an exploration of psychological depths. Relationships between father and daughter, daughter and dog, are delicately probed, but the dénouement is encumbered with so much allusive significance as to detract from the analytic purpose. "Why does she weep?" we ask, but with an increasing emphasis on the *why* rather than the weeping; the tension of the narrative and the psychological suspense are subjugated to the mere identification of some great crisis in the former lives of father and daughter. When all is revealed, it is – though worth waiting for – uncovered only by the sacrifice of one of the principal agents, and the sense of an over-inflated balloon being punctured is inevitable. A few ends are left to be tidied up with a clear explanation; the speciously happy ending sounds a final jangling note after the horrors that have emerged.

Mirage and mystery

Antony Beevor

GEOFFREY HOLIDAY
People of Illusion
201pp. Century. £8.95.
0712608532

If Oscar Wilde did not say that symbolism is the curse of the writing classes, then he should have. To end a novel with the evaporation of a mirage is a dangerous device at the best of times. On the last page of *People of Illusion* it is tantamount to self-immolation, since we are reminded of how insubstantial the major characters have been. If Geoffrey Holiday intended that all along, as a statement of human insignificance, then perhaps there is little hope for him. The most infuriating thing is that this could have been a remarkable book.

Set around 1957 in southern Algeria, it begins in a semi-abandoned fort where René, a radio operator, has volunteered for a life of solitude. This looks promising, but the book then cross-cuts the desert experiences of two couples – an Englishman and his beautiful painter wife, and a French ethnologist, Robert, with a spoilt tomboy, Carole. (The taming of Carole, by the desert and her man, is an unfortunate cliché of soft-core machismo.) Last but not least are the Touareg, the personification of the desert's mystery, a romantic European notion which Europe will destroy.

The life of the Touareg is convincingly portrayed, but when it comes to individuals one cannot help feeling that the author has not managed to get any closer to them than has his ethnologist Robert. The unselfconscious vignettes of *colons perdus* provide the most interesting characters, and the atmosphere in their bars is beautifully described. So are the street scenes, so is the sensation of the desert at night; but as soon as the author feels a little symbol coming on, his prose takes on the purple tones of a travelogue voice-over.

Holiday's novel is unsatisfactory, too, in its structure. The switch from group to group leads one to expect, if not a dramatic finale, then at least a unity or contrast of fates. *People of Illusion* merely returns its characters to dust.

Criminal proceedings

T. J. Binyon

ROSS LAIDLAW
The Linton Porcupine
164pp. Canongate. £8.95.
0862410630

Blackmailed into spying for Henry VIII, Cambridge graduate Nicholas Wainwright is sent to Scotland in 1545 to discover whether it is true that the Scots have a secret weapon: how else could they have inflicted an annihilating defeat on a superior English force at the battle of Ancrum Moor? An interesting, well-researched and exciting gallop through the by-ways of history, which does, however, spare no details in its descriptions of sixteenth-century beastliness.

PAULINE KING
Snares of the Enemy
200pp. Collins. £7.50.
0002319446

Matron of Ambelhurst, a big Roman Catholic monastic boarding school, is discovered stabbed to death in the cloisters; murder investigated by Inspector Evan Morgan, a devout Wesleyan Methodist, who has some initial difficulty in accustoming himself to the surroundings. The author has obviously had experience of such establishments, and the affectionately well-portrayed environment makes up for the stiffish narrative style and not wholly credible plot.

PAULA GOSLING
Monkey Puzzle
256pp. Macmillan. £7.95.
0333386590

Oddball murder in the English department of an American university: the investigation and subsequent developments are handled by eccentric, sexy Lieutenant Jack Stryker, who finds that his growing relationship with one of the instructors, pretty Kate Trevorne, is playing merry hell with his objectivity. The narrative goes off with a good big bang, but gets bogged down in the later stages. All in all, however, an interesting plot in an excellently portrayed setting, with a good clutch of eccentric characters and suspects.

The white and the red

Patricia Craig

BARBARA COMYNS
The Juniper Tree
187pp. Methuen. £8.95.
0413573001

Barbara Comyns's new novel – her first since 1967 – is partly a recasting of the Grimm story with which it shares a title (a variant title is "The Almond Tree"). Both story and novel open with the same enticing image; it is mid-winter, and a beautiful, statuesque woman stands peeling an apple in the courtyard before her house. The knife slips, and blood falls on the snow. The story gives her reaction: "'Ah', said the woman . . . 'had I but a child as red as blood and as white as snow!'" In the novel, which is set in the Richmond (south-west London) of the present, Comyns's narrator Bella Winter simply observes the incident. A friendship is about to spring up between the two women, though one is rich and cosseted, and the other works hard for a living, selling antiques in a shop across the river Thames at Twickenham.

The child as red as blood and as white as snow has already been conceived, and the friendship lasts just as long as Gertrude Forbes's pregnancy; she dies at the end of it, of delight, as in the story; or, as it may be, of "a haemorrhage amongst other things". Like the prototype, Gertrude, in a whim of pregnancy, had gorged herself on the fruit of the juniper tree which grows in her garden – a detail which may or may not have significance. The way is now open for Bella – also beautiful, but disfigured by a scar on her cheek – to take Gertrude's place, and so bring into being an ill-fated little family like the one in the old tale: father, stepmother, daughter, stepson. The daughter is Bella's illegitimate black child Marline, or Marlinchen (more happily known as Tommy). Some years go by, and an accident duly occurs with an old oak chest, a storing place for apples; a broken neck is futilely bandaged, and a frantic interment carried out. Barbara Comyns even manages to insert into her modern story the emblematic objects distributed by the original dead child-cum-bird – gold chain, red shoes and millstone – though she balks at the fairy-tale resurrection.

In some versions of the old story, the child's bones are boiled in a soup which the unknowing father sups with pleasure – "My mother killed me, / My father ate me", goes the refrain; merrily gruesome because, in the magic world, no real harm can befall the innocent. The pattern demands the restoration of any head cut off through malice, and the proper dispatching of the evil-doer. The modern approach is more equivocal. Barbara Comyns turns the story on its head, for a start, by making the stepmother her central character, and by not endowing her with blackness of heart; like other Comyns heroines, Bella recounts her singular experiences with a childlike directness and impassivity, which are very striking. "I told Helen my story and she went home and cried", states the opening line of the novel *Our Spoons Came From Woolworths* (1950), also written in this manner. What is solicited is not so much pity for those ill equipped to cope with peculiar troubles, like seeing your mother's ghost sitting in a rocking-chair (*Spoons*), or being obliged to make a show or yourself by levitating in front of an audience (*The Vet's Daughter*), but rather approval for the way the characters are not got down by atrocious circumstances. Comyns's heroines, and her novels, are plaintive, strange and robust all at once.

The mood was established with her first book, *Sisters by a River* (1947), which is really a string of childhood episodes recollected with ferocity ("Daddy was very fierce with us, we would suddenly hear an angry trumpeting noise and he would grab as many of us as he could and bang our heads together . . ."), but tellingly under-written. The childish spelling and unarranged state of the narrative produce a thoroughly ingenuous effect. The quirky viewpoint persists from book to book, but subsequent Comyns novels go in less for artlessness; and *The Juniper Tree* is very cunningly contrived indeed.

The hump-backed lady bearing baskets of damaged china to the Twickenham shop, the shivering greyhound and the carved stone bear, the doll with a burnt arm recalled by Bella, Mr Crimony the coal merchant, who seems to have strayed out of some Victorian card game: all these contribute to the homely but disquieting atmosphere in which the characters, even the most prosaic of them, are placed. The old, outlandish tale is an appropriate model for a novelist like Barbara Comyns, whose imagination is drawn to the odd, the macabre and the picturesque. As an exercise in reconstruction, using the old ingredients but producing a fable for a different age, *The Juniper Tree* could hardly be more satisfactorily accomplished.

The refugee's journey

Monty Haltrecht

KAREN GERSHON
The Bread of Exile
184pp. Gollancz. £8.95.
0757035994

The Bread of Exile is in some ways a picaresque novel, taking Inge, a Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany, from reception camp to sympathetic foster-parents and on to the involuntarily anti-semitic schoolteacher who tries to convert her. She runs away, only to be exploited as a home help, and runs away again, this time to a job in a department store and her first wretched independence in a bed-sitter. The handling of some of the external action is at times perfunctory. The homosexuality of an older boy, Rudi, who befriends Inge and her brother on the train out of Germany, having instantly, it transpires, fallen in love with the brother, is somewhat baldly revealed, and with this kind of plot it is virtually axiomatic that Inge should become involved with the airman son of the house where she works as home help. But this is only the external action.

Karen Gershon herself came to England as a Jewish child refugee in 1938, and the two non-fiction books she has already published about the life of refugees have not exorcized the nightmare. This is a passionate, truthful account of the essential terrible experience, of bereavement and loss. Only thirteen, Inge is bereft of the last remnant of family when she is separated from her brother at the reception camp; she loses even her name when she is given her English name, Jill; she clings to what is left, the few belongings in her cheap new suitcase, but doesn't ask for her teddy-bear back when it is taken from her after she has been sick in the night, because she'd included it against her mother's orders, and its loss seems to her to be God's punishment for her disobedience.

In England Inge meets with some kindness, not always with understanding, and on occasion with further hostility, as a Jew, an alien in wartime. There are battles with a foreign language, a new culture, the rigmarole of permits. There is the paramount need for love. Against odds the child fights her way to young womanhood.

This is a novel, finally, about guilt and its corrosive effects, for Inge has been abused, reviled as an inferior being in Germany, and, in the way of the persecuted, has come to believe the propaganda. The core of anguish in the book is in Inge's own mind. She constantly misunderstands other people's motives, and the author intervenes, with dogged insistence, to explain the reality. Inge is told that her parents must be special to have such special children. She thinks not – she "had coped with being parted from them for the past two years by persuading *herself that they* were no great loss to her". The relationship with her brother, with its scrupulous consideration, sensitive moral awareness and fraught sense of responsibility, is minutely delineated, and very Jewish. Inge rebuilds herself, painfully, a survivor of horrors – and the reader is uneasily guilty about the failures of morality and responsibility in his own everyday life.

Mixed feelings

James Campbell

JAMES KELMAN, AGNES OWENS and ALASDAIR GRAY
Lean Tales
286pp. Cape. £8.95.
0224022628

My enthusiasm for the Glasgow school of writing (always a risky sort of classification, but justified in this case) guttered ominously at the prospect of this book; scrapings, it seemed fair to assume, pasted together by a publisher's interest in the recent literary and commercial success of one of its contributors, Alasdair Gray. Hope was not strengthened by the blurb, which speaks of "a fine selection of short stories" by all three authors, whereas Gray's allotment is in fact taken up by two profiles, five parables or sayings (three of them only a sentence long), the completion of a fragment by Robert Louis Stevenson, a letter to the trustees of a travelling scholarship, a postscript describing "how *Lean Tales* was made", and only three short stories – pretty thin ones at that. James Kelman's portion appeared to be composed mainly of left-overs from his collection, *Not not while the giro* (1983), and Agnes Owens's stories are frankly apprentice works. Lean tales indeed.

In fact, the collection is a trove of invention and resourcefulness, and it matters not at all that in the case of Gray, whose presence is sure to draw attention to the book, it doesn't deliver what it promises to. He is a minor Scottish renaissance unto himself: he drew the authors' portraits for *Lean Tales*, designed the cover (and wrote the misleading blurb), just as he illustrated and designed his earlier books, *Unlikely Stories, Mostly*, *Lanark* – actually a combination of two novels, one naturalistic, the other fantastic – and *1982, Janine*.

"My world was confused, shabby and sad", he writes in the autobiographical "Report to the Trustees of the Bellahouston Travelling Fellowship", dated 1959, "and I tried to write an ordinary, easily-read language which showed the sadness and the shabbiness but made the other things (which keep us alive) equally evident. While I worked at this writing I enjoyed the best happiness of all . . . ." This mixture of emotions infuses all of Gray's writing, including the items here. The "Report to the Trustees" takes the form of a letter written by the young writer-painter after spending a year in Spain trying to work but struggling with chronic asthma. Its interplay of sickness, creativity and sexual frustration suggests that it was a source for the naturalistic part of *Lanark*, whose hero Duncan Thaw *experiences similar torment* in a Scottish hospital. As in the novel, the author of the report achieves a clearer vision of his own wretchedness through suffering, thereby partly redeeming it.

The un-self-pitying compassion which Gray grants himself in the report is focused on others in the two profiles, one of the neglected Scottish playwright Joan Ure, who died in 1978, and the other of the little-known Arran-based abstract expressionist, Alasdair Taylor. The most intriguing of his contributions, though, is that which begins: "My father was the Rev. John Kirkwood of Edinburgh, a man very well known for the rigour of his life", and reaches a temporary stop four pages later with the sudden voice-over: "And then Robert Louis Stevenson laid down his pen." Gray proceeds to place "The Story of a Recluse" in the context of Stevenson's *oeuvre* and to offer suggestions as to how it might have developed. The result is entertaining, even if more Gray than Stevenson. "From now on", Gray writes of himself in the Postscript, "he would write only frivolous things." By the looks of it he's already started, and the results are fine.

The first impression made by James Kelman's list of contents was removed equally swiftly. Like Gray, Kelman swings between two basic styles: the naturalistic, which conveys to the reader, as no other writer does, the feeling of Glasgow, the smell and sight and sound of pubs and betting shops, workingmen's café's, the texture of the streets. Kelman's other mode is that of the title story of his 1982 collection, and also of the longest (and apparently most recent) in this book, "Oh Jesus, here come the dwarfs"; both take the form of an interior monologue, employing familiar stream-of-consciousness techniques, with a hint of surrealism. He is at his strongest when writing naturalistically, as in the best story in the entire book, a compact 300-worder called "Busted Scotch", about a game of blackjack. Like Charles Bukowski, whom he resembles in more than one way, Kelman thrives on squalor and failure. Bukowski's good writing dried up when he became rich and successful; one hopes that Kelman continues losing at cards for as long as he keeps writing.

Both Kelman and Gray are known quantities. Agnes Owens, though she has published one novel, *Gentlemen of the West* (1984), is less well known, and, I think, less practised. Like Kelman, she writes about destitution, mainly Glaswegian, with the occasional bizarre touch which characterizes the perceptions of these writers. She met the others when she joined a writing class (she was a student, one of their number was the teacher) and although her stories rise above most of the material produced in such circumstances, some still have a whiff of the classroom about them. She doesn't always write from experience – one story, related by a man, is set in a Spanish-speaking country at the time of an execution – but the voice is usually authentic when she does so.

Dropping the Jiffy-bag

Christopher Hawtree

JULIAN GLOAG
Blood for Blood
302pp. Hamish Hamilton. £9.95.
0241115256

Criminal activity, from concealed bodies and murder to plagiarism, recurs in Julian Gloag's novels. In *Blood for Blood*, Ivor Speke, who supplements by his pen what remains of a modest inheritance while he ploughs on with *Love's Loose Strife*, is forced to turn over his crime-fiction-reviewing work to a loyal typist – "Bleddisloe – bound to be the same old stuff, but he's good on the clergy and it's always well worked-out . . . . *The Blooding* is undoubtedly vile . . . . *Bodleian Bodies* – a coy academic teaser by Leo Leotard of all people, with his face all over the back of the jacket. The other three are probably also-rans, but you might take a quick glance" – so that he can be free to pursue a case more unusual, and more elegantly told, than generally tumbles from his Jiffy-bag: "For a man who had spent so many years sediulously (and ineffectively) cultivating his own back garden, the wide world was suddenly full of discomfiting questions."

Rape and incest are just two of the matters Speke stumbles on as he traces his way back along the trails which led to the multiple stabbing of his rich lawyer friend, Vivian Winter. A smokescreen is set up, fuelled by a mysterious, finely calculated will and by the number of gruesome case-histories, each a thriller in itself, with which Vivian Winter was involved in his turn.

Blood for Blood is never obscure, however, for Gloag's prose, which is clear and seldom diverted by its acerbic observations, carries us along at a rate which scarcely allows a pause. His plotting might not pass all the Detection Club's rules, but his ability to sustain a diverse collection of settings and characters, none of whom – even the sour-tempered publican – appears to have been wheeled from the stock-room, more than compensates for the sudden sense of cheating which heralds the ending.

Although the author of *Our Mother's House* and *Lost and Found* is, like his hero, on a holiday in this book, *Blood for Blood* is more than the pastiche its title might suggest, and it offers a rarer kind of entertainment than is to be found in many of the volumes with which T. J. Binyon deals so efficiently in these pages. It is a pity that Gloag's new publisher should have produced the book in such a perfunctory manner, for it will withstand few borrowings.

Sustaining the story

Alan Brownjohn

BOB WILSON
Stanley Bagshaw and the Mafeking Square Cheese Robbery
0 241 112303
ROBERT McCRUM
Brontosaurus Superstar
Illustrated by Michael Foreman
0 241 11457 8
Hamish Hamilton. £5.95 each.

In the very best of picture story-books narrative and illustration are perfectly blended equals, so beautifully adjusted that it is unthinkable to stop and distinguish one from the other. It is the most delicate kind of balance. If the images fail to live up to the plot, the most skilful of narratives is compromised. When, on the other hand, the quality of the tale falls short of the artist's talent, the result is not so swiftly disappointing; but it is disappointing all the same. The pictures deserved a lot better, one feels. Or, more severely, the words should not have been spun out as a mere excuse for the illustrations.

In Bob Wilson, illustrator and storyteller are combined, and his third Stanley Bagshaw book starts promisingly enough, with his narrative style gently reminiscent of another Stanley, Mr Holloway:

In Huddersgate (famed for its tramlines)
up north where it's boring and slow,
Stanley Bagshaw resides with his Grandma
at number 4 Prince Albert Row.

This young Stan has a ginger cat to whom he reads stories, a lovable neighbour, Nellie, and a tendency to daydream along the ginnels and main streets of Huddersgate – which are devoid of tramlines, in the event, yet also curiously free of cars. Bob Wilson sustains the rhyming quatrains but interspersesthem with interjections in speech bubbles from cat, or over-flying bird, or Stan himself, and thus makes the rhymes harder to hear in the reading.

Does it matter? It does, because many of the pictures are crisply and wittily drawn and the words ought to snap into action with a comparable briskness. Even more importantly, however, the plot should present itself as convincingly as the images, and Wilson's makeshift tale of two bungling crooks outwitted by young Stan's wild western boldness is embarrassingly short on comic inventiveness. The thinness shows in the sudden crudity of the illustrations when the tale reaches its climax in a confusion of banana-skins and tomato-sauce. Wilson's drawing is much better (and more cunningly amusing) when he restores Stan to the parlour at home, where tea is ready, the goldfish is bewailing the boredom of his own existence, and a prim Grandma is reading *Women in Love*.

Brontosaurus Superstar suffers from being patently a sequel to a predecessor which is only half-heartedly explained. Apparently Robert McCrum's brontosaurus began life as a birthday cake. It is now in America, breaking all box-office records with its own musical, *Bones!*, and young Bobby's parents take him to Hollywood to see his old friend. The poor creature, overweight and miserable, has fallen prey to an unscrupulous manager, but when it is brought back to England to take part in *This Is Your Life*, it escapes to resume an idyllic existence among the flowers of the suburbs.

Re-cycling the sagas

Andrew Wawn

KEVIN CROSSLEY-HOLLAND
Axe-Age, Wolf-Age: A selection of Norse myths
Illustrated by Hannah Firmin
128pp. André Deutsch. £7.95.
0 233 97688 4

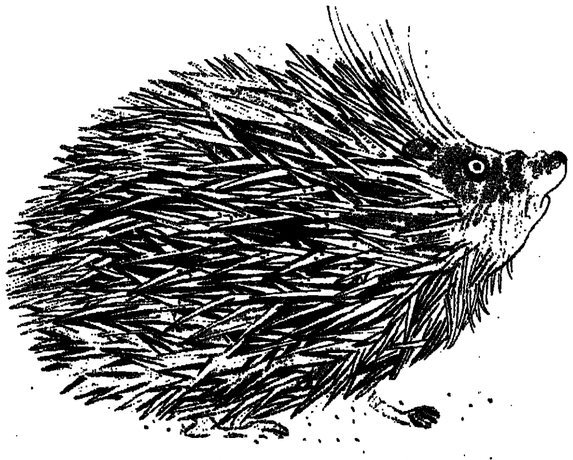
"The children of this age are fortunate in having the treasure-house of the world's literature unlocked for them and its stories displayed in a form they can understand." The "age" referred to here was Edwardian England, the "treasure-house" was Old Norse myth and saga, and Albany Major's 1905 review of E. E. Speight's *Children of Odin*, a popularization of Norse wonder-tale and legend, goes on to reveal a truculent confidence in the value, particularly for younger readers, of such re-orchestrations of Eddic story. The reviewer, himself an enthusiastic re-cycler of sagas, declares himself to be bored beyond measure by Greco-Roman myth, with its tyrannical hold over school curricula; he is proud that he and fellow Icelandophiles can legitimately (he insists) claim kinship with Odin's children; and he is indignant that such heroic narratives are betrayed in Speight's volume by limp-wristed illustrations which present the formidable Thor as a "beardless stripling" and the voluptuous Gerdr as a "scrubby little handmaiden".

What is clear from Speight's volume, Major's review and some dozen similar volumes published during the first decade of the century is that Icelandophile authors and reviewers alike took the task of translation or adaptation seriously, and that they received, in a number of cases, enthusiastic encouragement from leading university-based scholars of Icelandic who happily embraced the proposition that modernization might be at least as important as mutation and middle-voice subjunctives in sustaining the life of the legends of the North.

Late twentieth-century scholars are perhaps more circumspect, suspicious even, about the role of the popularizing modernizer, uncertain about the status of the task – yet with no good reason. Every generation of readers, young and old, deserves to have these sinewy Norse tales recreated for them, and the current generation is fortunate in having its version recreated by an accomplished poet, experienced in the problems of translation, sensitive to the linguistic texture of the primary sources, with what Seamus Heaney calls their "scop's twang" and "iron flash of consonants cleaving the line".

This volume reproduces twenty-two of the thirty-two pieces originally published in *The Norse Myths*, 1980, retold from material derived from the *Poetic Edda* and from Snorri Sturluson, and spanning myths from the "burning ice, biting flame" of the Creation to the "wind-age and wolf-age" of the world's ending, and the new life beyond. The volume is apparently aimed at younger readers, hence the omission of the generous and informative notes and introductory essay to the 1980 volume, and hence the addition of, it must be said, disappointingly bland illustrations.

Crossley-Holland's adopted style is well suited to these tense expressive narratives. Spirited colloquialism is balanced by discriminating use of large and small-scale syntactic and verbal repetition; by a preference for short sense units and simple co-ordination rather than for Ciceronian terracing of subordinate clauses; by a capacity to winch the language into taut alliterative patternings; and by an ear for the telling neologism and dialectalism as descriptive language stretches out towards the unimaginable: stallions "guffing in the freezing air"; and the drizzle of Ginnungagap "an unending dismal hagger" with "skuthers of wind". Parsimonious adult purchasers may consider the fuller text, still available in Penguin, better value for money.



Gerald Rose's rebellious hedgehog, from Trouble in the Ark *(Bodley Head. £5.50. 0 370 30833 6).*

A modern mouse

John Mole

ROSEMARY WELLS
Noisy Nora
Collins. £2.95.
0 00 183740 0

Recently there has developed an alternative to the traditional mouse tale, with its cheese-laden kitchen dressers, portraits of heavily-whiskered ancestors in the hall and raffishly disreputable Uncle Mice who cause twitches of apprehension when they come to stay but redeem their reputations when they deal with the cat. The cat has been left behind to trouble the old-style families who deserve no better. The new-style domestic mouse unit is more likely to be disturbed by the recognizable fears and insecurities of parenthood and growing-up. One feels that the "drat that mouse" breed of humans on the other side of the wainscot have been replaced by a household reared on Melanie Klein and Dr Spock.

Into this company, in 1976, came Rosemary Wells's delightful rhyming picture book *Noisy Nora*, now deservedly reissued. Nora, who is the middle mouse-child of three, wears a bright yellow pinafore. The arrival of baby Jack preoccupies mother and father, the latter being so lovingly intent upon his new son that he smokes a ruminative pipe while bathing and drying him. He plays chess with his elder daughter Kate while Mother burps the baby and lets Kate help her in the kitchen. Nora's recourse is to attention-seeking mayhem. "First she knocked the lamp down / Then she felled some chairs / Then she took her brother's kite / And flew it down the stairs". The kite is a huge one with yards of tangled string but it is not quite clear why her little brother (who can only just stand in the book's last, reconciliatory picture) should have such an advanced toy. I suppose the point is that Nora *doesn't* have one. In fact it appears that she has nothing – which is, of course, exactly how she feels. And to make things worse, in the rhyme's refrain, her sister can only aggravate matters by adding to her father's "Quiet!" and her mother's "Hush!" with "Nora . . . why are you so dumb"? The real wisdom of this story, however, lies in the detail of the pictures, most notably Nora's tiny, surreptitious jauntings of the baby, and her jabbing of Kate with a sharpened pencil while Father is reading with her.

The author and critic Robert Leeson is this year's winner of the Eleanor Farjeon Award which is presented annually by the Children's Book Circle. Leeson's most recent book, *Reading and Righting*, was reviewed in the *TLS* of March 29, 1985.

In the issue of March 29, the illustrator of Emil Pacholek's picture book, *Here Comes the Bride* (André Deutsch), was incorrectly given on page 352. The book is illustrated by Glenys Ambrus.

Country house visits

Celina Fox

Young fogeys are getting younger every day. National Trust Acorns have presumably been devised to awaken in the young an enthusiastic support of the country's heritage. Each folder contains a series of costumes or room settings to cut out and slot together, with additional information on the social context of the subject. Beverly Saunders has a pleasingly bold graphic style, better on pattern than on period feel. The Elizabethan man looks like a pantomime prince and sticklers might quibble at the profile of some furniture mouldings.

However, the main problem with these books is their lack of editorial logic. The first in the series, *Elizabethan Country House Costumes*, is the most elaborate. It contains two reversible figures of Sir Richard Hawksworth and his wife, Lady Fleur, in their underclothes, and six reversible costumes for them to wear. Each is illustrated in colour on one side and in black-and-white line on the other, to be coloured in. But both sides are full frontal and have faces, which rather spoils the point of *dressing* the figure. The text presents further problems. It is six pages long, divided between three sheets: the inside cover and the reverse of the interior and exterior scenes which illustrate the Elizabethan country house where the Hawksworths live. This untidy solution is abandoned in ensuing volumes, the text being confined to the cover in *Edwardian Costumes* and separate sheets in the *House* volumes.

The lengthier text of *Elizabethan Country House Costumes* does allow the unacknowledged author to go into some detail about articles of clothing and the domestic arrangements of the house. Subsequent volumes are more perfunctory, written in a twee style with plenty of exclamation marks: "cosy" and "delicious" are frequently used adjectives. The rich suburban milieu in which the Edwardian Fitzgerald family lives is too close to that of the Victorian household, the Robertses, to avoid the duplication of nannies, hard-working servants and afternoon "at homes" for the ladies. There are occasional statements of dubious accuracy: a Victorian middle-class family would scarcely lock up its tea caddy. Moreover, the useful section devoted to books to read and places to visit in the *Costume* books is not pursued in the *House* books, a surprising waste of an opportunity to publicize National Trust activities.

Nevertheless, these colourfully packaged volumes should appeal to doting grandparents on country house visits. Once the format is settled, who knows where they might not lead their young followers: *Inside a Palladian Palace* or *Inside a High Rise Council Flat*?

Beverly Saunders: *Elizabethan Country House Costumes*, 0 224 02199 0.
Edwardian Costumes. 0 224 02202 4.
Inside a Tudor House. 0 224 02200 8.
Inside a Victorian House. 0 224 02201 6.
National Trust/Cape. £3.50 each.

Paperbacks

Biography and memoirs

ANTHONY HYMAN. *Charles Babbage, Pioneer of the Computer*. 278pp. Oxford University Press. £4.95. 0 19 281491 5. □ Charles Babbage (1792–1871) is celebrated today as the farsighted pioneer of computing, whose proposed Analytical Engine, had it ever been completed, would have produced a machine far more advanced than anything available before electronic pioneers developed logically comparable devices in the following century. Anthony Hyman's biography (published in 1982 and reviewed in the *TLS* of November 26 that year) gives due attention to Babbage's work on the Analytical Engine (and its predecessor, the Difference Engine) and the frustration of their development by lack of adequate governmental support as well as by the mechanical difficulties of constructing machinery to an unprecedented standard of accuracy. But there is much more to Babbage than his engines, and he is shown here in the full scope of his wide-ranging and confident practical mind, busying himself with lighthouse equipment, postal reform, authors' societies, parliamentary reform and life peerages, as well as mathematical calculation and machine-tool design. The world of polite scientific and intellectual society of mid-nineteenth-century London is well portrayed, involving Sydney Smith, Charles Dickens and Byron's daughter, Lady Lovelace, as well as Babbage's friends (and enemies) in the Royal Society. A good deal of new documentation has been adduced for this biography, some of it rather heavily handled from a literary point of view, but it is an advantage that Babbage's own quirky but enjoyable *Passages from the Life of a Philosopher* (1864) has been used as the backbone for so much of the narrative, not least for its admirably clear explanations of the Difference Engine and its successor which are reprinted in the appendices.

R. H. BRUCE LOCKHART. *Memoirs of a British Agent*. 355pp. Macmillan. £6.50. 0 333 38602 7. □ Robert Hamilton Bruce Lockhart's memoirs (first published in 1932 and reviewed in the *TLS* of November 10 that year), which culminate in his mission to Moscow in 1918 to establish contact with the Bolsheviks, are not only a vivid personal account of dramatic historical events but also a portrait of an extremely engaging personality. His tone is lightly self-deprecating, his tale full of humorous anecdote and closely observed portraits of his contemporaries, remarkably free of conjecture and retrospective speculation. He recounts his early adventures in the Far East, where he failed to make a fortune in the rubber plantations of Malaya, fell for a dusky maiden (whose passion for playing light music loudly on the gramophone he found somewhat trying), contracted a near-fatal dose of malaria and was shipped home to a despairing family. Entering the Consular Service more by good fortune than through driving ambition, his first official posting came in 1912 when he was sent as Vice-Consul to Moscow. He immediately felt a great affection for the city and its lavish, coarse, free-wheeling citizens, and made invaluable contacts among the more critical, liberal intelligentsia. During the war years he witnessed the increasing despair at the inefficiency of the tsarist régime, and the February revolution came to him as no surprise. He met Kerensky, but an "indiscreet" attachment to a married woman led to his being recalled to London in the summer of 1917. After the Bolshevik coup, he was seen as the ideal person to report on developments and was sent back to Moscow. His position was a precarious one but he was able to make close contact with the Bolshevik leaders, Trotsky especially, and report back on the separate peace negotiations and the advisability of Allied intervention. After the attempt on Lenin's life, he came under suspicion and was arrested. He was, however released and exchanged for Litvinov (his counterpart in London). Doubt has been cast by historians on whether Lockhart's account is as full and as accurate as it might have been, but few readers will fail to be enthralled by his descriptions of the early months of the Soviet régime, the Bolshevik leaders and such characters as Arthur Ransome, Moura Budberg and Sidney Reilly.

Literature

CYRIL CONNOLLY. *The Condemned Playground*. 287pp. Hogarth Press. £4.95. 0 7012 1924 6. □ Here is yet another reprint of Cyril Connolly's celebrated selection from his work between his leaving Oxford and the end of the war, when he was cultural spokesman of the *Horizon* generation. (Reviewed in the *TLS* of December 1, 1945.) This edition is to be commended for Philip Larkin's excellent short introduction, in which he discusses Connolly's opinion of reviewing as a function of Failure, but also draws attention to the "incidental satisfactions" to be derived from the book. The parodies read datedly once their models are no longer part of the current coin of cultivated discussion, but the criticisms implied in his skilfully handled pastiches are still apparent. Some of the best pieces are on novel-reviewing, making points that remain valid half a century and more after their first appearance. The variable nature of the contents makes one wish that a selection of Connolly's best work of all periods had been selected for paperback reprinting.

SHEILA SULLIVAN (Editor). *"How Unpleasant to Meet Mr. Eliot!" Victor Purcell's* The Sweeniad. 114pp. Allen and Unwin. £5.95. 0 04 800034 5. □ Privately printed in 1956 and first published in 1958, *The Sweeniad* by "Myra Buttle" was discussed in the *TLS* (June 6, 1958) as "a brilliant firework display" which was, however, too derogatory to be satisfactory as a parody of T. S. Eliot. Now reprinted under a title of its editor's choosing, and under the real name of its author, V. W. W. S. Purcell, the historian of Malaya, it deserves resurrection for its combination of well-informed polemic with intermittent parody (though the likeness of *The Waste Land* to its "The Vacant Mind" is not as delicately or as tellingly executed as Henry Reed's celebrated "Chard Whitlow"). Even though the bludgeoning of the argument detracts from the edge of the parody, there is much to enjoy in this full-blooded attack on "the Twentieth Century's undisputed Cham of Poetry", even from one of those mentioned as "the jugglers and the acrobats of Letters, / Mere contortionists who mock or parody their betters". A long introduction by Sheila Sullivan stresses the serious purpose behind the original, relating it closely – but rather doggedly – to various themes in anti-Eliot criticism before and after Miss Buttle's (or Dr Purcell's) time.

Oenology

EDMUND PENNING-ROWSELL. *The Wines of Bordeaux*. Fifth edition. 606pp. Penguin. £12.95. 0 14 04620 2. □ This by now standard work has been fully revised and reset for its fifth edition. Since it first came out in 1969 (it was reviewed in the *TLS* of November 5 that year) a number of other well-received treatises have been published, but Penning-Rowsell's thorough and systematic but none the less engagingly individual work still holds its own alongside them. This edition incorporates much new information on changes of ownership of individual properties and of Chartronnais broking firms, further remarks on the perpetual problem of revising the 1855 classification, and up-to-date general commentary on specific vintages based on fifteen further years of skilled sampling. When the first edition came out there had scarcely been time to assess the peculiarities of the 1964 vintage, but it can now be seen in proper perspective, and the particularly well-informed comments on the celebrated '61s merit special attention. A useful new appendix lists the growing number of "second" wines put out by the grander chateaux.

Travel

ROSE MACAULAY. *They Went to Portugal*. 433pp. Penguin. £3.95. 0 14 009537 3. □ This wide-ranging anthology was first published in autumn 1946 (and reviewed in the *TLS* of November 9 that year) when the responses of several centuries of English travellers to the special charms of Portuguese climate and scenery must have seemed particularly warming to post-war literary London. Now that Portugal is within easy reach for the British tourist trade, and the beaches and geysers of the Algarve are no novelty, the range and enterprise of earlier generations still seems striking. Dame Rose Macaulay's compilation is no mere anthology, practised anthologist though she was. Her travellers, famous and obscure, are deployed in novel and amusing groups, numerous enough to justify the comment of a mid-nineteenth-century Portuguese writer that "in England there is no fool who does not write a *tourist* book, no great fool who does not write one about Portugal". The linking commentary, which is humorous as well as learned, could well have come from the pen of Aunt Dot herself.

KATE O'BRIEN. *Farewell Spain*. 229pp. Virago, £3.95. 0 86068 695 5. □. Kate O'Brien first went to Spain, as a governess in Bilbao, in 1922, when she was in her twenties. Her reactions to the country were thus tested well before the Civil War, and *Farewell Spain* – even though the Battle of Guadalajara and some resolutely stated opposition to Franco are found in its final paragraphs – shows at their freshest her responses to a country that to her was a *femme fatale* among nations. There are sniffy remarks about British tourists, arriving by sea at Santander, and their sentimental attitudes, yet some of her own reporting is equally rose-coloured. A genuine enthusiasm for the country, its people and customs, is displayed all through, with fine set pieces on Santiago de Compostela, the Escorial, and on St Teresa (about whom Kate O'Brien was later to write much more fully). *Farewell Spain* (originally published in 1937 and reviewed in the *TLS* of August 14 that year) might be read in conjunction with *Mary Lavelle*, her first fictional writing about Spain, which came out the previous year. Mary O'Neill, whose original illustrations are reproduced from the first edition, provides an introduction about the author and their joint travels in Spain.

Reviews by Alan Bell, Toby Fitton, Geoffrey Naylor and Elizabeth Winter.

Also in paperback

HUGH BROGAN. *The Life of Arthur Ransome*. 456pp. Hamish Hamilton. £4.95. 0 241 11407 1. □ First published in 1984 and reviewed in the *TLS* of February 3 that year.

RICHARD COBB. *Still Life*. 161pp. The Hogarth Press. £3.95. 0 7012 1920 3. □ First published in 1983. Reviewed in the *TLS* of October 21 that year.

BENEDETTO CROCE. *Aesthetic: As science of expression and general linguistic*. Translated by Douglas Ainslie. 503pp. Peter Owen. £8.95, 0 7206 0635 7. □ First published in 1953. Reviewed in the *TLS* of March 20 that year.

MARGARET FITZHERBERT. *The Man Who Was Greenmantle: A biography of Aubrey Herbert*. 250pp. Oxford University Press. £3.95. 0 19 281856 2. □ First published in 1983. Reviewed in the *TLS* of October 14 that year.

P. J. KAVANAGH. *The Perfect Stranger*. 182pp. Fontana. £2.50. 0 00 654108 9. □ First published in 1966. Reviewed in the *TLS* of November 17 that year.

HAROLD OSBORNE (EDITOR). *The Oxford Companion to the Decorative Arts*. 864pp. Oxford University Press. £12.50. 0 19 281863 5. □ First published in 1975. Reviewed in the *TLS* of March 19, 1976.

ARTHUR RANSOME. *Autobiography*. 368pp. Century. £4.95. 0 7126 0726 9. □ First published in 1976. Reviewed in the *TLS* of September 10 that year.

EDWARD SEIDENSTICKER. *Low City, High City: Tokyo from Edo to the Earthquake, 1867–1923*. 302pp. Penguin. £6.95. 0 14 006770 1. □ First published in 1983. Reviewed in the *TLS* of November 25 that year.

BARBARA J. SHAPIRO. *Probability and Certainty in Seventeenth-Century England: A study of the relationships between Natural Science, Religion, History, Law and Literature*. 347pp. Princeton University Press. £10.50. 0 691 00790 X. □ First published in 1983. Reviewed in the *TLS* of May 20 that year.

JOHN MCMANNERS. *Death and the Enlightenment: Changing attitudes to death in eighteenth-century France*. 619pp. Oxford University Press. £6.95. 0 19 281867 8. □ First published in 1981. Reviewed in the *TLS* of May 14, 1982.

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The eighteenth volume of the valuable Pittsburgh Series in Bibliography is Joel Myerson's *Emily Dickinson: A descriptive bibliography* (209pp. University of Pittsburgh Press, distributed in the UK by TABS. $35. 0 8229 3491 4). Professor Myerson provides full descriptions of the first and other early important editions, with appropriately briefer ones of later printings, taking his survey down to 1982; and while in the introduction he eschews writings about Emily Dickinson "except in cases where they include something by Dickinson published for the first time", he has added in an appendix a list of the principal monographs in English. There is also an especially useful full index to the poems.

Harold Acton: A bibliography has been compiled by Neil Ritchie (188pp. Casa Giardo, 50020 Lucolena in Chianti, Florence, Italy. £18). It lists Sir Harold's publications in English, American and Italian editions, with descriptions of books to which he has written contributions and articles in periodicals.